FRIDAY
May 10, 2024

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Congress targets PM over crony capitalism

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Jharkhand poised to witness a 'direct fight'

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NEARBY

KSRTC to revamp Airavat fleet

BENGALURU
The Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) is set to add new Airavat Club Class buses and Airavat sleeper buses into its fleet to enhance the comfort of long-distance travellers. » Page 4

'No victim has lodged plaint against Prajwal'

NEW DELHI
The National Commission for Women has said that no victim has come forward to register a complaint against MP Prajwal Revanna, who has been accused of sexual exploitation of women. » Page 10

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JJP, INLD seek floor test, say BJP govt. lost majority

Dushyant tells Governor that JJP is open to backing a non-BJP party for forming a government in Haryana; Congress leader Hooda asks him to present all 10 party MLAs before the Governor

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

After three Independent MLAs withdrew support to the Bharatiya Janata Party government in Haryana earlier this week, the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) and the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) on Thursday wrote to the Governor seeking an immediate floor test to determine whether the government has a majority or President's Rule should be imposed.

JJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala, whose party had remained absent during the voting on a confidence motion for the BJP government in March, said in his letter to the Governor that his party did not support the government and was open to backing any political party in the State for forming a new government.

> Given these developments and the clear stance of my party... it is evident that the incumbent government no longer commands a majority in the Legislative Assembly
>
> **DUSHYANT CHAUTALA**
> Jannayak Janta Party leader

The letter came a day after he offered to "consider" outside support to the Congress to topple the BJP government.

Referring to the withdrawal of support by three Independent MLAs and two vacant Assembly seats, Mr. Chautala said in his letter that "given these developments and the clear stance of my party - i.e. JJP, which does not extend its support to the present government and is open to backing any other political party for government formation, it is evident that the incumbent government no longer commands a majority in the legislative assembly".

Saying that there was an urgent need to "reinstate stability" and "uphold democratic norms" in Haryana, Mr. Chautala sought directions to the present State government under Article 174 of the Constitution to prove its majority on the floor of the House or the imposition of President's Rule.

INLD secretary-general and the party's lone MLA Abhay Chautala too wrote to the Governor seeking directions to the BJP government to prove its majority.

Congress leader and former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda said the JJP must parade all 10 of its MLAs before the Governor amid reports that some of them had turned rebels.

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TURMOIL AND TEST
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SSLC annual exam-1: Pass percentage declines by 10.49 points

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The pass percentage of SSLC annual exam-1, results of which were announced on Thursday, declined by 10.49 points compared to last year. The overall pass percentage stood at 73.4 this year compared to 83.89 in 2022-23.

The Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) officials attributed this to the new monitoring system of webcasting through CCTV cameras in all examination centres.

Normalisation of scores
Officials said the actual result had declined by 30% this year, which is why the State government decided to enhance the normalisation of scores in the interest of students as webcasting was a new intervention.

It was decided to reduce the qualifying marks for attracting grace marks from the existing 35% to 25%, and grace marks had been increased from 10% to 20% in all subjects as a one-time measure for all three SSLC annual exams of 2024.

After the normalisation, the pass percentage of the SSLC annual exam-1 was 73.4%, and around 1.7 lakh students had benefited. However, the actual pass percentage was 54.

Key dates
- Submission of online application for scanned copy of answer script: May 9 to 16
- Submission of online application for re-evaluation and retotaling: May 13 to 22
- SSLC exam -2: June 7 to 14

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Quota issue, caste census will haunt the BJP: Revanth

R. Ravikanth Reddy
HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has said the BJP's wish to "scrap reservation", its North-South division, favouritism towards Gujarat, and denial of caste census are serious issues that will haunt the party in the election.

In an interview with *The Hindu*, Mr. Reddy said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi could challenge Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Chief Minister said Ambani and Adani were welcome to Telangana to invest and generate jobs but not to take over the State's assets.

INTERVIEW
» PAGE 17

At ₹558 crore, EC makes highest-ever seizure in State during LS elections

Afshan Yasmeen
BENGALURU

The Election Commission seized a whopping ₹557.69 crore from March 16, when the model code of conduct (MCC) for the Lok Sabha election came into force, until the end of the final phase of polling on May 7 in the State. This is the highest-ever pre-poll seizure in Karnataka. During the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, ₹88.27 crore was seized, according to Election Commission data.

This is apart from the seizure of goods worth ₹348.71 crore by the Commercial Taxes Department. These goods include iron ore and ghutka, the proceeds of which would have been used for inducements. Besides, from August last year to March 16, poll personnel seized cash and goods worth ₹537 crore in Karnataka. The seizures include ₹151 crore in cash, liquor worth ₹42 crore, drugs worth ₹126 crore, gold worth ₹71 crore, and other items valued at ₹144 crore.

Unaccounted for cash seized from a house in Ballari. FILE PHOTO

During Assembly polls
During the Assembly elections in 2023, the total pre-poll seizures in Karnataka, including cash, liquor, drugs, and precious metals, had touched ₹413 crore by the day of polling on May 10. This was apart from the confiscation of other goods worth ₹320 made by the Commercial Taxes Department and ₹288.25 crore by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). Confiscations by the ED are nil this time. The 2023 seizures were two times higher than what was recorded during the 2018 Assembly polls when ₹185.74 crore had been seized. While ₹14.42 crore was seized during the 2013 Assembly polls, ₹28.08 crore was confiscated during the 2014 Lok Sabha polls.

The major hauls this time include the seizure of illicit liquor worth ₹98 crore by the Excise Department in the United Breweries unit at Thandya industrial area near Nanjangud in Mysuru district.

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Lifting export ban raises onion price

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

The Union government's decision to lift the ban on onion exports has led to volatility in Bengaluru's onion markets. The price of onions, which was around ₹20-₹25 a kg until last week, has jumped to ₹35-₹40 in retail markets.

With vegetables getting costlier, onions, which were among the cheaper items in the basket, provided some stability to consumers. However, after export was allowed again, most farmers tried to make the best of the situation in both local and international markets, leading to a price increase.

On April 29, the price of big-sized onions was between ₹1,600 and ₹1,800 for 100 kg, while the best Gola variety was priced at ₹1,900-₹2,100 for 100 kg at the Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) yard in Yeshwantpur. On May 7, the same varieties were priced between ₹2,200-₹2,400 and ₹2,400-₹2,500 for 100 kg, respectively. The spike has led to a ripple effect in retail markets.

Merchants say while the price may go up by another ₹5-₹10 a kg in the coming weeks, this year's monsoon will be crucial. FILE PHOTO

"Because the government allowed exports, farmers sold their onions at higher prices, and both prices and arrivals went up in the market," said B. Ravi Shankar, an onion merchant and secretary of the Onion Merchants Association of Bengaluru. He said the price fell slightly on Wednesday, but it might go up as some farmers sell their stocks in intervals.

"Currently, farmers, especially in Vijayapura and the surrounding regions, have stored good quality onions for a good day and are only selling what is in excess. In fact, only 10% of what is coming to the market is of good quality, and that is why the prices of such varieties are high. When it goes even higher, the farmers will sell in intervals," Mr. Shankar said.

C. Udayashankar, another onion merchant, said onion arrivals were less this week in the market. "The export rates are good, and that is why farmers are directly exporting onions from their districts instead of bringing them to the market here. We are expecting the market to stabilise by Monday."

The merchants also said while the price might go up by another ₹5-₹10 a kg in the upcoming weeks, this year's monsoon will be very crucial.

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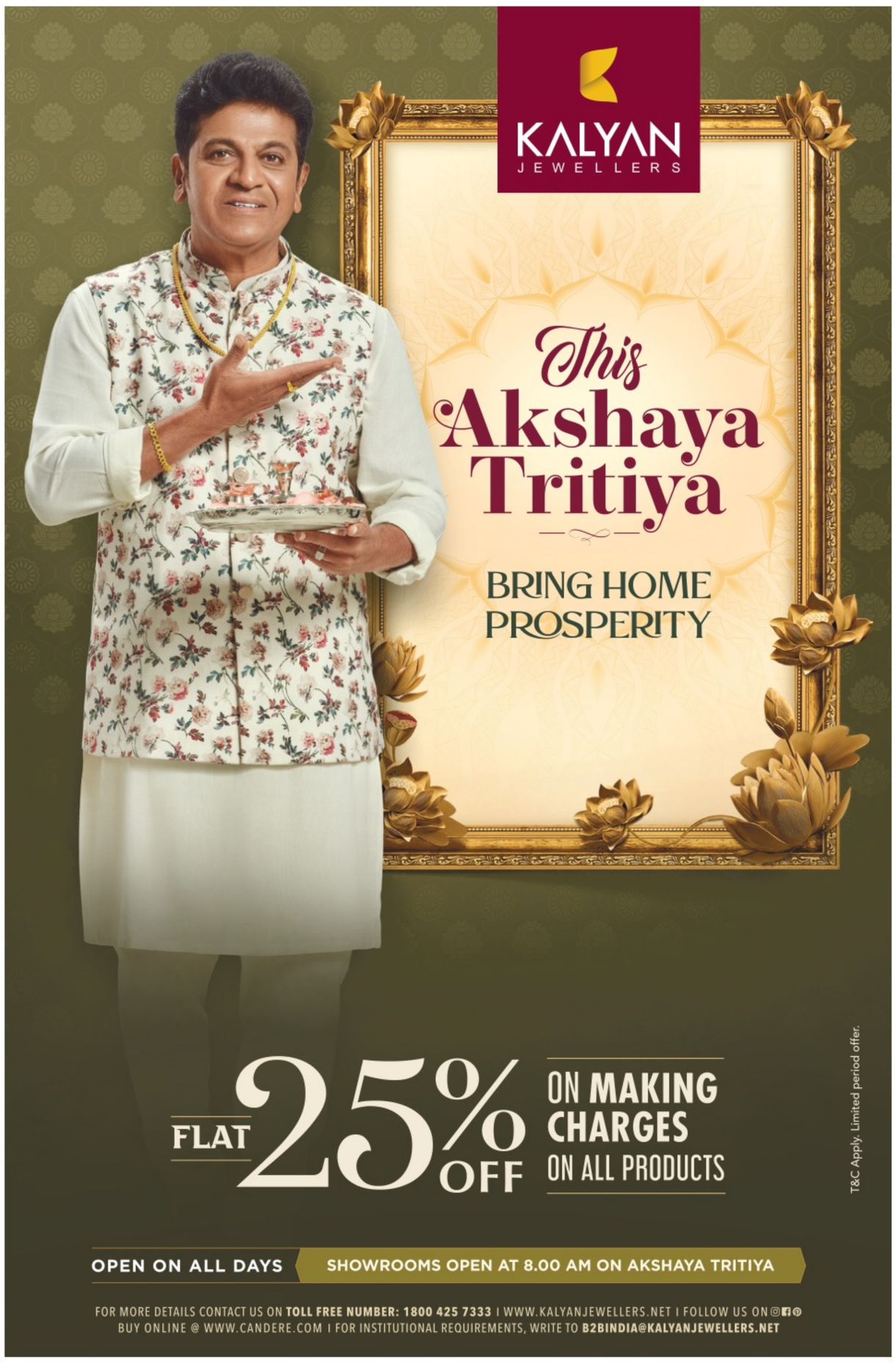
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Nosthush — living the dream

The left-arm spinner, who has roots in India, will play for USA in the ICC Men's World Cup scheduled to begin on June 1; in 2015, he took a life-altering decision to move to the land of opportunities where everything clicked into gear

GETTY IMAGES

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

Like most children, Kenjige Nosthush dreamt of playing for the Indian cricket team. That goal may not have materialised, but in a welcome twist of fate, Nosthush is on the verge of accomplishing the next best thing.

These are exciting times for the left-arm spinner, who will compete for the United States of America (USA) national team in the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup. And with it comes the chance to bowl to the likes of Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma et al. in USA's group stage clash against India at New York on June 12.

When Nosthush terms this a "home" game, the obvious question arises. He may have strong roots in India, but Nosthush now considers his adopted nation, USA, as home.

Nosthush's parents are coffee growers in Chikkamagaluru. He did his middle and high school in The Lawrence School, Lovedale, in Udhagamandalam. He caught the eye of The Lawrence School, Lovedale coach Irfan Sait, who is the Director of Karnataka Institute of Cricket (KIOC) in Bengaluru.

"Twice a year – during my vacations in summer and December – Irfan sir and my parents ensured that I came to Bangalore and trained at KIOC. I stayed as a paying guest in Bangalore, and went back to school when my cricket was done," Nosthush, who is currently training at KIOC here, said.

After completing his 10th standard, Nosthush moved to Bengaluru. He took to cricket seriously, and moved up the ranks to represent Modern CC, Swastic Union and Jawans CC in the KSCA first division league.

In 2015, Nosthush took a life-altering decision. He had given the sport everything he had, but he could not quite make it to the highest grade in India. With a Masters degree from Dayananda Sagar Institutions, Nosthush moved to the USA with a dream of starting over.

His cricket days were behind him, or so he thought. "I thought I was done with cricket. I went to the USA to work for a couple of years," Nosthush said, "But cricket took me back."

Nosthush was called to play for a cricket club in the New York area. He caught the bug, and immersed himself in the sport all over again. Within a couple of years, he made it to the USA national team. This came after good showings in selection trials held across the country.

Nosthush, however, fell short of the eligibility criteria set to represent the country. He had lived in the USA for about 18 months, when three years was the requirement.

Nosthush made use of a rule which stated that this shortcoming can be waived off if he spent 800 hours coaching kids. Nosthush took the opportunity gladly.

"I realised that it was not wise to wait for the three-year criteria when this option was available. So I trained in the mornings, and then spent time coaching kids," Nosthush said.

After finishing his community service, Nosthush made his international debut against Uganda in 2017. The series did not go well for Nosthush and his mates, which meant he had wait a little over six months to get back to action.

In this new cycle, USA did wonders in the ICC World Cricket League Division 2 to gain One Day International status in 2019. This paved the way for USA to gain automatic entry to the T20 World Cup by virtue of being the co-host.

To play in the world's most prestigious cricket tournament, with millions of viewers, is a dream come true for Nosthush.

Bowling to international superstars in not an entirely new experience for the Nosthush, as the 33-year-old has served as a Mumbai Indians net bowler in IPL 2024.

To dawn the national jersey, especially against India, is a different league altogether. "To play in a World Cup - it has not sunk in yet. This is a huge deal. Everyone wants to play in a World Cup. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity to play against India. I am best prepared as I can be," Nosthush said.

Nosthush is confident that he can draw on the experience of playing for MI New York in the Major Cricket League (MLC), and for MI Emirates in the UAE International League T20.

At the World Cup, the USA is up against it, having been slotted with India and Pakistan in the same group. But for Nosthush, nothing is impossible. "The key for me is to enjoy the entire experience of playing a World Cup. Yes, we are the underdogs, but we are good enough to pull off a few upsets," Nosthush said.

THE GIST

- Nosthush's parents are coffee growers in Chikkamagaluru
- He did his middle and high school in The Lawrence School, Lovedale, Udhagamandalam
- Nosthush is confident that he can draw on the experience of playing for MI New York and MI Emirates

Bayern faces uncertain future after Champions League elimination

Agence France-Presse
MADRID

Bayern Munich's Champions League elimination at the hands of Real Madrid on Wednesday will kick-start a summer of soul-searching with the German giants facing an uncertain future.

Just 12 months away from hosting the Champions League final at their Allianz Arena home, Bayern will begin a summer rebuild without knowing who will be in the coaching dugout next season.

Dethroned as German champions for the first time in 11 years by Xabi Alonso's rampant Bayer Leverkusen, Bayern's Champions League run offered a sense of salvation for a club in a mire largely of their own making.

Bayern agreed to part ways with manager Thomas Tuchel in February after falling behind Leverkusen in the title race. Despite talk of a "mutual decision" Tuchel at the time said he would have preferred to stay in the role.

While Tuchel's stock has since risen after taking Bayern to within minutes of a Champions League final, several candidates have already knocked back a chance to replace him as coach.

Alonso, one-time mentor Julian Nagelsmann and former Manchester United boss Ralf Rangnick have all reportedly declined Bayern's interest.

The last-minute elimination, headlined by referee frustrations and an uncharacteristic error by captain and goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, means a first trophyless season since 2012.

A season without silverware is always an unthinkable outcome in Munich. But with Borussia Dortmund in the Champions League final and Leverkusen on course for a treble, Bayern has plenty to ponder.

Speaking at a gala dinner at a gourmet Madrid restaurant hours after the elimination, Bayern CEO Jan-Christian Dreesen spoke to players and club officials, including Tuchel and honorary president Uli Hoeness.

Dreesen acknowledged the "very painful defeat" but said the 2025 Champions League "home final is our big goal now!"

The former banker's speech, intended to cut through the disappointment in the room, was greeted with sporadic applause.

Hoeness, who has officially stepped down from club duties but remains Bayern's principal powerbroker, criticised Tuchel just a fortnight ago for his inability to develop junior players.

"He doesn't think you can improve (Alphonso) Davies, (Aleksander) Pavlovic or (Jamal) Musiala.

AFP

"He thinks if it doesn't work, you should just buy another one. I think you should work with them and give them confidence."

That all three played a starring role on Wednesday – with Davies scoring Bayern's only goal and Munich local Pavlovic anchoring defensive midfield – only serves to highlight Hoeness' misguided criticism.

Tuchel said Hoeness had "hurt his honour as a coach" but for Bayern the statements not only eroded any chance of holding onto Tuchel, but turned potential other targets away from the role.

Tuchel had previously left the door ajar to staying at Bayern beyond the season, but said on Wednesday night "it's no secret that I loved my time in the Premier League with Chelsea and in England."

Bayern sporting director Max Eberl, in the job since March, faces several challenges on the pitch.

Alonso's decision to knock back Bayern as well as reported interest from Liverpool and Real means Leverkusen will again be a real threat next season.

Dortmund may be fifth in the league this season but could go into the next campaign as Champions League winners.

Several of Bayern's biggest stars, including Leon Goretzka, Kingsley Coman and Serge Gnabry, are under performing, with their output not matching their weighty pay packets.

Defenders Dayot Upamecano and Min-jae Kim, who cost a combined €92.5 million, have largely ridden the bench in recent months, with Tottenham outcast Eric Dier preferred to partner Matthijs de Ligt at centre-back.

The club's better performers are also on the wrong side of 30. Neuer, who impressed despite his mistake, is 38 and Thomas Mueller turns 35 this year.

Harry Kane, undoubtedly Bayern's star this season with 44 goals in 45 games, will turn 31 in summer.

The combined challenges means Bayern, trophyless and without a manager, faces the biggest challenge to its hegemony in a generation.

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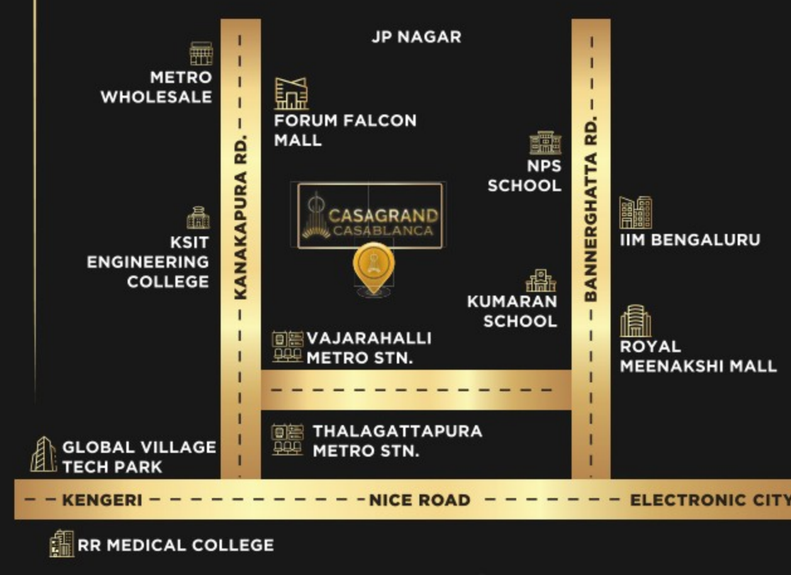

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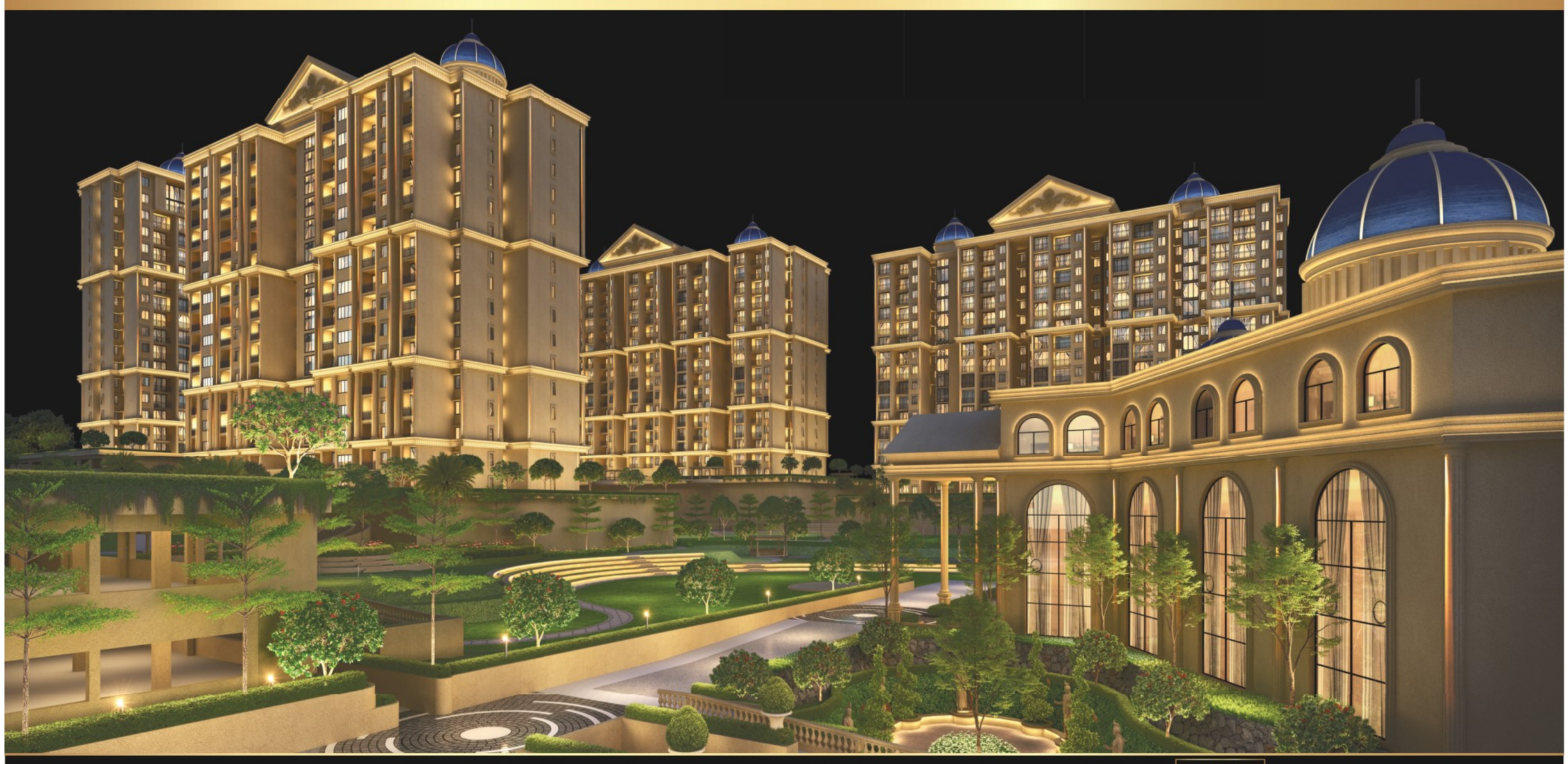

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EXPECTED MARKS 631 — DARSHAN K R

EXPECTED MARKS 630 — KAVYA SHREE R

EXPECTED MARKS 630 — NIKITHA G S

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‘We need to stop the fear mongering on vaccines’

The highest estimated risk of TTS is still much lower than the annual risk of dying in a road accident. While we should strive to improve on both numbers, since every death that can be avoided matters, there is absolutely no reason for fear; not then, not now a couple of years after

Anurag Agrawal

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated a fringe anti-vaccine movement, previously limited to niche communities, either skeptical about vaccine benefit, or suspicious of vaccination motives. Unfortunately, today it is no longer surprising to meet even physician colleagues who consider COVID-19 vaccination to have been either a mistake or even an unholy nexus between politics, pharma, academia, and industry. In this background, it is not surprising that recently, a rare life-threatening post-vaccination complication named ‘thrombosis with thrombocytopenia syndrome’ (TTS), was the topic of well-circulated disinformation on social media.

The trigger for this was a court submission by Astra Zeneca that its COVID vaccine, ChAdOx1-nCoV19, manufactured as Covishield by Serum Institute in India, can in rare cases cause clots due to TTS. Many people mistakenly saw this as new information that to their mind explained the recent increase in heart attacks and strokes, among the youth, when this is old information about a rare side-effect that occurs in just a few people out of every million recipients. As far back as March 2021, after tens of millions of doses had been administered, countries in Europe and UK reported cases of TTS, a week to a month after receiving ChAdOx1-nCoV-19, with remarkably extensive thrombosis.

In India and other nations, a risk-benefit analysis, and consideration of alternatives, favoured continuation of vaccination. GETTY IMAGES

Risk vs benefit

In some nations, with other available highly effective options, recombinant DNA vaccines were paused. In India and other nations, a risk-benefit analysis, and consideration of alternatives, favoured continuation. Unfortunately, with elections around the corner, this story has become politicised and has been used to imply irreparable harm to our health, alluding to an increase in heart attacks and strokes. It was also used to cast aspersions on the Serum Institute and vaccine advocacy. Nothing could be further from the truth, as illustrated by objectively considering the risk, benefit, and alternatives that guided India’s vaccine policy during the pandemic.

First, risk. TTS was found to occur most commonly in fit, healthy, young women around thirty years of age at a very low frequency of around one to two per lakh (100,000). At a general population level, it was estimated to occur at only about two to three cases per million people vaccinated. To put these numbers in perspective, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways estimates annual deaths in road accidents at about ten per lakh. Thus, the highest estimated risk of TTS is still much lower than the annual risk of dying in a road accident. While we should strive to improve on both numbers, since every death that can be avoided matters, there is absolutely no reason for fear; not then, not now a couple of years after.

Second, benefit. Covishield was associated with over 80% protection against severe COVID-19 and over 90% protection against death in multiple studies, including during the severe Delta wave. For a 50% chance of contracting COVID-19 and 0.1% risk of death, this corresponds to a mortality benefit of around 40 in 100,000 - that outweighs the risk by far. The true benefit is much more than this, however. Reducing disease severity is important for minimising immediate suffering and stress on healthcare systems, as well as minimising long-term disability and risk of premature heart attacks and strokes. While we do not have sufficient Indian data for Covishield, it is clear from global data that COVID-19 increased the risk of subsequent thrombotic events, including heart attacks and strokes by three-four fold, even after the infection was fully resolved. This risk was observed very early in the pandemic, even before vaccines were developed, and was found to be reduced by vaccination. The current disinformation about vaccines and young heart attacks ignores this important data from large studies.

Last, but not the least, alternatives. European nations, UK, USA, and Australia stopped the use of ChAdOx1-nCoV19 / Covishield after TTS reports, despite benefits outweighing risks. They had sufficient doses of mRNA vaccines that were more immunogenic and not associated with TTS although cases of non-fatal myocarditis had been observed. Given this alternative, it was a sensible decision. For India, given the extremely large number of doses required and slow production of Covaxin, which requires culture and inactivation of the virus, it made more sense to continue.

> TTS occurs mostly in fit young women around thirty, at a very low frequency of around one to two per lakh . At the general population level, it is estimated to occur in two to three cases per million people vaccinated

Can we predict or prevent vaccine induced TTS? It seems that this is a rare side effect of the current recombinant DNA platform technology, since a similar vaccine used in America, developed by Johnson and Johnson, also increased TTS risk. Antibodies to platelet activating factor (PF4) are seen in most patients, similar to another drug-induced TTS - heparin-induced thrombosis and thrombocytopenia. Overall, it seems that the same powerful induction of immune response that makes DNA vaccines effective also carries a small risk of inducing auto-immune responses that lead to side effects. People who benefit the most from vaccines - older people and those with diabetes - seem to also be least likely to develop such aberrant responses. A similar pattern has been seen with mRNA vaccines and autoimmune myocarditis, where young healthy males were most at risk. Killed virus vaccines appear to be safer but induce lower levels of immune response, conferring lower levels of protection against severe disease and death. This was importantly seen in elderly deaths during the 2022 Omicron wave in Hong Kong.

No perfect choice

As in much of medicine, there is no perfect choice. Further research is essential to maximise benefits, minimise risks, and increase alternative options. However, at any given point of time, a decision must ultimately be made within available options, given available knowledge. In my own family, fully aware of the TTS reports from Europe and UK, I chose to go ahead with Covishield for high-risk older adults, as soon as possible. My low-risk daughters received Covaxin. Sensibly, Covishield was not used to vaccinate children. The risk-benefit analysis was unfavourable, with risk of severe infection and death in children being ten to hundred-fold lower than in adults. There were some missteps also. First and foremost, we have a data problem. Despite having given nearly a billion doses of Covishield, almost all our knowledge of critical side effects like TTS comes from outside India. The new digital India can do better. Second, while it is acceptable to choose an imperfect best option, we need to be nimbler in creating alternatives. For example, protein-subunit vaccines like Covovax (also made by Serum Institute) could have replaced Covishield for boosters. I do note that the risk of TTS was much lower in subsequent doses and the older population that received boosters was at the least risk.

A question that comes up repeatedly is whether there has been a recent increase in thrombotic events like heart attacks and strokes in otherwise healthy young people. Indian data is unfortunately lacking, but western data confirms a large increase in young heart attacks and strokes after COVID-19. As mentioned previously, this risk was highest in the unvaccinated and increased after every surge in infections. SARS-CoV2 never quite left. It keeps circulating and evolving to escape immunity, periodically giving rise to infection surges that are mostly ignored due to milder symptoms in a partially immune population. For example, based on viral load in sewage and sequencing of wastewater, we had a silent surge of undiagnosed JN.1 SARS-CoV2 infections in January this year. Whether these undetected COVID-19 infections are increasing clotting risks is not established, but it is far more likely than the concerns about a vaccine given more than two years ago doing so. Unfortunately, we have not been able to develop an adequate vaccine for preventing infection so far, at least over a long period. I fear that with anti-vaccine disinformation reaching new heights, enthusiasm for vaccine research will decline. That would be the real tragedy.

To conclude, vaccines are some of the most effective public health interventions against infectious diseases. We need to stop the fear-mongering and celebrate the great Indian COVID-19 vaccination drive that saved innumerable lives. If at all I had a wish, it would be that more of us received them sooner.

(Dr. Anurag Agrawal is Dean, BioSciences and Health Research, Trivedi School of Biosciences at Ashoka University. anurag.agrawal@ashoka.edu.in)

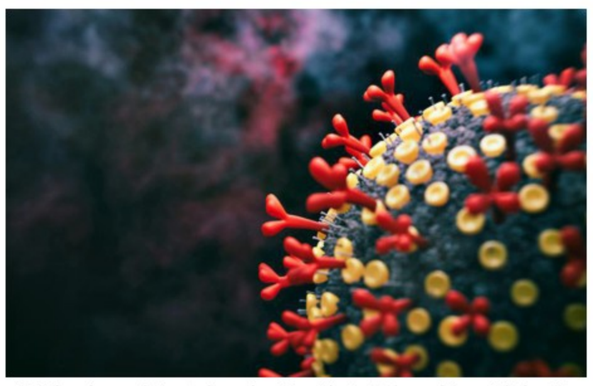
All about FLiRT, the new COVID-19 variants

Saumya Kalia

The COVID-19 cycle is active again with new variants in circulation. KP.2 and KP1.1, are dubbed ‘FLiRT’ variants, and are descendants of the Omicron JN.1 which spread globally over the winter last year.

The downstream variants are linked to new cases and a small surge in hospitalisation in the U.S., according to the Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA). FLiRT cases have also soared in the U.K., South Korea and New Zealand, renewing fears of a fresh COVID-19 wave.

The Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) has detected 238 cases of KP.2 and 30 cases of KP1.1 circulating in India, as of May 6. The new variants appear to outstrip their ancestor and other Omicron variants. KP.2, the more dominant strain of the two, in particular, is believed to leap past immunity built up from vaccines and previous infections.



KP.2 has been detected predominantly in Maharashtra, Odisha, Goa and West Bengal; KP1.1 in West Bengal, Maharashtra and Gujarat; KP.3 in Uttarakhand. GETTY IMAGES

However, the periodic COVID-19 spikes are routine and to be expected as “COVID-19 will continue to morph into, not an endemic, but a cyclical disease”, says Rajeev Jayadevan, co-chairman of the National Indian Medical Association (IMA) Covid Task Force in Kerala.The FLiRT variants reframe COVID-19 management as a longer affair, one that demands sustained surveillance, customising precautions and ensuring universal protection for the vulnerable.

The FLiRT variants

KP.2 and KP1.1 sublineages are descendants of the JN.1 variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus with two new added spike mutations. They are nicknamed the FLiRT group of variants; the acronym indicates two specific mutations, which when they occur together, end up conferring greater invasive properties to the virus. The U.S. Centre for Disease Control and Protection says KP.2 accounts for approximately 25% of new cases as of April 27.

In India, “we can confirm that COVID-19 cases are rising , and KP.2 is a commonly found variant,” says Dr. Jayadevan. According to INSACOG, KP.2 has been detected predominantly in Maharashtra, Odisha, Goa and West Bengal; KP1.1 in West Bengal, Maharashtra and Gujarat; KP.3 in Uttarakhand. This is not to say that the variants are not circulating in other regions, but the proactive tracking in these states have identified JN.1’s descendants. The symptoms of the new variant are similar to those of other Omicron subvariants: sore throat, cough, nausea, congestion, fatigue, headache, muscle or body ache, loss of taste or smell.

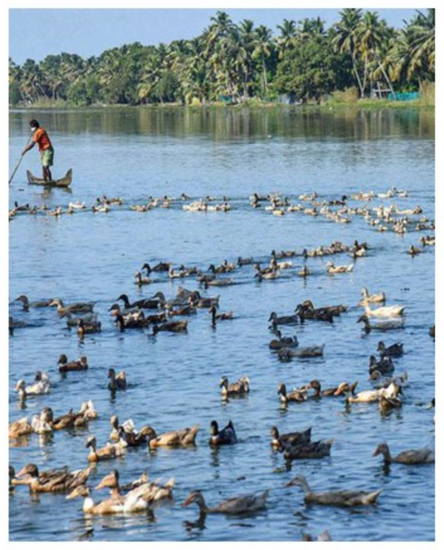
Immune evasive

Researchers at the Kei Sato lab in Japan showed the KP.2 variant had an “increased immune resistance ability... more than previous variants including JN.1”. Their preliminary evidence found that KP.2 was able to escape the immune protection derived not only from the most updated vaccine (the monovalent XBB.1.5 vaccine) but also from the breakthrough infection with JN.1 afterwards. KP.2 has “profound immune evasive properties”, notes Dr. Jayadevan. The research, published on the pre-print server *bioRxiv*, showed the variant is thus able to leap over the most recently built immunity fence. More research is needed to understand how deeply and permanently the new mutations evade the immune system, researchers note.

Although immunisation with up-to-date SARS-CoV-2 vaccine produces antibodies recognising JN.1, experience indicates vaccination done earlier is still effective in preventing severe COVID-19 from newer variants. The European Medicine Agency recently recommended “updating COVID-19 vaccines to target the new variant JN.1” before another round of vaccinations is undertaken. Meanwhile, AstraZeneca on May 7 said it has initiated the worldwide withdrawal of its COVID-19 vaccine due to a “surplus of available updated vaccines” since the pandemic.

In India, experts have also detected a new surge of cases since early April, with approximately one in six tests turning positive, compared to zero in March. With limited testing, however, the exact prevalence and geographic spread are unknown. It is too early to say if all the new COVID-19 cases or hospitalisations are due to KP.2 or KP1.1 in India, explains Dr. Jayadevan. Moreover, increased transmissibility does not necessarily mean the new variants will cause more severe COVID-19 illnesses. Precautions and prescriptions remain similar: maintain hygiene, wear masks in crowded places, stay home if unwell, and vaccinate.

(saumya.k@thehindu.co.in)



Since 2006 India has experienced annual outbreaks of HPAI in different regions, leading to substantial economic losses. PTI

Could bird flu turn into the next pandemic?

Bindu Shajan Perappadan

Several states across the country including Kerala, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand among others have been directed to stay vigilant after the emergence of a highly pathogenic avian influenza that has spread to cattle was detected in eight U.S. states. While the Centre has asked for vigilance, the World Health Organization (WHO) expressed deep concern regarding the increasing transmission of H5N1 bird flu to other species, including humans. ”The current bird flu outbreak, which originated in 2020, has affected not only ducks and chickens but also cows and goats, which is why the flu has been described as “a global zoonotic animal pandemic,” it said.

WHO is warning about the risk of the virus evolving to infect humans and gaining the ability to transmit from human-to-human. Although there is no evidence of human-to-human spread yet, the mortality rate among those infected through contact with animals remains high. Over the past 15 months, WHO has documented 889 human cases across 23 countries, resulting in 463 deaths, a mortality rate of 52%

The Central government in India maintains that Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI), commonly known as bird flu, was first detected in the state of Maharashtra in February 2006. Since then, the country has experienced annual outbreaks of HPAI in different regions, leading to substantial economic losses.

WHO is warning about the potential risk of the virus evolving to infect humans and gaining the ability to transmit from human-to-human

The disease has been reported in 24 states, resulting in the culling of over 9 million birds to control its spread. It’s important to note that vaccination against HPAI is not permitted in India. The Centre has maintained that with the long-term use of vaccination either the disease has become endemic and therefore widespread, or the infection in affected animals is too difficult to detect. Accordingly, the Government of India does not permit use of any vaccine against avian influenza in the country.

An article titled, ‘Bird flu in US cows where will it end’ in *Nature* on May 8, 2024, notes that various forms of the H5N1 virus have been circulating since the 1990s. A particularly deadly variant that was first detected in 1996 killed millions of birds and has been found in numerous mammalian species, including seals and mink. But until now, cows were not among the virus’s known hosts. US officials first announced on 25 March that H5N1 had been found in cattle. Cows from 36 herds in 9 states have tested positive as of 7 May. Tests of pasteurized milk have found no living virus. But the virus’s increasing ubiquity has made scientists uneasy. It adds further that from a human perspective, cows might be one of the worst possible animal reservoirs for influenza because of their sheer number and the degree to which humans interact with them. Culling poultry has curbed previous bird flu outbreaks, that isn’t a viable option for cattle. The animals are too valuable and, unlike birds, don’t seem to die from the infection.

(bindu.p@thehindu.co.in)

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Rain brings cheer; more work for traffic police

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The arrival of rains in the city brought relief from the scorching heat for everyone but doubled the work of traffic policemen since Monday.

With inundation being reported on many major roads, flyovers, and underpasses across the city with every downpour, traffic police are risking their lives to facilitate vehicular movement.

Two policemen attached to R.T. Nagar traffic station escaped with minor injuries while clearing an uprooted tree during the rain when desperate motorcycle riders knocked them down in a bid to pass through the blocked roads on Wednesday.

"We are not trained for this job, but we have to do it to ensure free flow of traffic and ensure no traffic jams on the road," said a police officer who was clearing a tree that had fallen on the busy R.T. Nagar road.

According to a traffic police advisory, flooding has been reported at 90 locations and tree fall at 120 locations across the city since Monday.

After repeated attempts to call the civic agency, the traffic police had to rope in heavy construction equipment to clear the tree.

The traffic police personnel ae also equipped with basic tools to clear obstacles. "We used lathis to clear the clogged drains and plastic tubs to fill the potholes," a police personnel said.

On Thursday too, following rain accompanied by gusty winds, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike received complaints of 70 tree falls and 171 branch falls.

Motorists faced inconvenience due to flooding of roads in several areas.

"This is majorly due to clogged drainage and felling of trees due to road widening projects which have weakened the roots. Though it is not part of the traffic police's job to clear clogged drains and uprooted trees, the police have to do it to ensure the smooth flow of traffic. We make sure that traffic is cleared on the road and normal before signing off, no matter how long it will take," a traffic police said.

Though there is a disaster management cell to look after these issues, road users have high expectations from the traffic police in emergency situations like these, the officer added.

According to the traffic police advisory, flooding has been reported at 90 locations and tree falls at 120 locations across the city since Monday. The traffic policemen are working extra hours to ensure the safety of road users, a senior police officer monitoring traffic control room said.

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Decrease in equity mutual funds inflow in April

16 percent. Equity mutual funds attracted ₹18,917 crore in April, according to the Association of Mutual Funds in India. PTI

Number of countries to witness rise in exports from India

115 India's exports have increased to more than 100 countries during 2023-24 despite the economic uncertainties. PTI

Share of children to not receive measles vaccine in India

12 percent. Children receiving none of the double-dose, signals a "concerning gap" in immunisation coverage. PTI

Share of disease burden in India due to unhealthy diet

56.4 percent. Indian Council of Medical Research released 17 dietary guidelines to prevent diseases. PTI

Number of flights cancelled by Air India Express

85 Air India Express cancelled 23% of the total daily capacity as the cabin crew shortage continued for the third day. PTI

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Reservation within Constitutional bounds

How does the inclusion of Muslims in the OBC quota align with the Constitution's aim of social justice? Should India consider lifting the 50% cap on reservations to ensure fair representation for communities? Is it time for India to extend reservation benefits to Dalit Christians and Muslims to address historic discrimination?

LETTER AND SPIRIT

Rangarajan R.

The story so far:

A political slugfest has emerged over the reservation issues with the BJP making outlandish remarks about the Congress' demand for caste census by linking it to religion. The Opposition, meanwhile, had raised concern over the BJP's position on reservation, despite the latter's explicit denial of any change in policy.

Constitution and affirmative action

The Constitution aims to secure social justice while guaranteeing equality as a fundamental right. Articles 15 and 16 guarantee equality to all citizens in any action by the state (including admissions to educational institutions) and public employment respectively. To achieve social justice, they also enable the state to make special provisions for the advancement of OBC, SC and ST. OBC is a collective term to classify socially and educationally backward castes. Many States also classify certain castes as the Most Backward Classes (MBC). The reservation percentages vary from State to State.

In the *Indra Sawhney case* (1992), the Supreme Court upheld the 27% reservation for OBC. It opined that caste is a determinant of class in the Indian context and backwardness cannot be determined solely on economic criteria. However, to uphold the basic structure of equality, it fixed a cap of 50% for reservations unless there were exceptional circumstances. The reservation of OBC (27%), SC (15%) and ST (7.5%) resulted in a total reservation of 49.5%. The court also provided for excluding the creamy layer from OBC with an income limit currently at ₹8 lakhs per annum. Children of parents, either of whom entered the government service (Centre or State) as Group A/Class I officers and children of parents, both of whom entered as Group B/Class II officers are also excluded. In the *Janhit Abhiyan case* (2022), the court by a majority of 3:2 upheld the constitutional validity of the EWS reservation. It held that economic criteria could be a basis for reservation.

Affirmative action elsewhere

In the U.S., there is 'affirmative action' that consists of government-approved and voluntary private programs granting special consideration to racial minorities like African-American and Latin-American. In *Fair admissions vs Harvard case (2023)*, the U.S. Supreme Court, however, ruled that race-based affirmative action programs in college admissions violate the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution. In the U.K., the law enables voluntary 'positive action' which allows employers to combat under-representation of disadvantaged groups. France does not have any affirmative action based on race or ethnicity. It provides educational measures designed to increase opportunities for low-income students.

Current debate

The Constituent assembly that framed our Constitution was against reservation solely based on religion. The Constitution guarantees the prohibition of discrimination only based on religion under Articles 15 and 16. The inclusion of all Muslim communities within the OBC quota in Karnataka forms the basis for the BJP's campaign at present. However, it is pertinent to note that sub-categorisation for Muslims within the OBC quota has been present in Karnataka since 1995. The four per cent sub-categorisation for Muslims introduced in 1995 by the H. D. Deve Gowda-led government was removed by the previous government led by Basavaraj Bommai. This was redistributed amongst the OBC in the Hindu community. However, after observation by the court in the case challenging this order, the *status quo* continues. Muslim and Christian communities who are socially and educationally backward are provided reservations under the OBC/MBC category. There is also sub-categorisation within the OBC/MBC quota for Muslim communities in States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. This is because the term used in the Constitution is 'socially and educationally backward classes' and could encompass backward communities from all religions. It is only for being a member of a SC, 'The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) order, 1950' specifies that the person should profess only Hinduism, Sikhism or Buddhism. There is no such requirement for being a member of a ST.

The Congress, meanwhile, in its manifesto has promised that they would work towards removing the 50% cap placed on reservations.

The way forward

Reservation is affirmative action meant to balance the historical discrimination faced by OBC, SC and ST communities. Rohini Commission was set up to provide recommendations on sub-categorisation amongst OBC castes. Though the findings of the report are yet to be made public, it has been estimated that 97% of reserved jobs and seats in educational institutions have been garnered by just around 25% of the OBC castes/sub-castes at the central level. Close to 1,000 of around 2,600 communities under the OBC category had zero representation in jobs and educational institutes. While sub-categorisation has been implemented in 11 different States, it has not been carried out at the central level. A similar issue of concentration of reservation benefits persists in the SC and ST categories. There is no exclusion based on the 'creamy layer' for these communities. The Dalit Christians and Muslims also suffer from considerable discrimination and lack of opportunities. The government has constituted a commission headed by former CJI K. G. Balakrishnan to study the question of extending SC reservation to Dalits who have converted to religions other than Sikhism and Buddhism.

Increasing the reservation limit beyond 50%, sub-categorisation among reserved categories, introducing appropriate creamy layers for SC and ST, and extending SC reservations to Dalit Christians and Muslims are matters that are sensitive with their set of pros and cons. There must be effort nevertheless to deliberate on these matters and frame suitable policies such that the benefits of reservation progressively reach the extremely marginalised sections. The aim should be towards the continuous pursuit of social justice while maintaining a harmonious balance with equality guaranteed in the Constitution.

(Rangarajan R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. Views expressed are personal)

Changes overview

A brief summary of important developments with respect to reservations at the central level

Year	Key development
1950 & 1951	Commencement of Constitution and First Amendment - Enabling provisions in Articles 15 and 16 to make special provisions for advancement of OBC, SC and ST
1982	Reservation for SC and ST fixed at 15% and 7.5% respectively, in central educational institutions and public sector undertakings
1990	27% reservation for OBC in central government employment introduced based on the recommendation of the Mandal Commission
2005	93rd Constitutional amendment inserted Article 15(5) that enabled reservation for OBC, SC and ST in educational institutions including private institutions
2019	103rd Constitutional amendment inserted Articles 15(6) and 16(6) that enabled up to 10% reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) among the unreserved category in educational institutions and public employment

THE GIST

- Articles 15 and 16 of the Indian Constitution guarantee equality and provide for special provisions for the advancement of OBC, SC, and ST communities. The Supreme Court has upheld reservations for these communities, setting a cap of 50% unless under exceptional circumstances.
- There's a debate over the inclusion of Muslims in the OBC quota in Karnataka. While some argue it's in line with the Constitution's aim of social justice, others oppose it, citing historical opposition to reservation solely based on religion.
- Suggestions include sub-categorisation within reserved categories, addressing the concentration of reservation benefits, extending reservation to Dalit Christians and Muslims, and deliberating on increasing the reservation limit beyond 50%. These measures aim to ensure social justice while maintaining equality as guaranteed in the Constitution.

Why did Interpol issue a blue corner notice against Prajwal?

How is a blue corner Interpol notice different from a red corner notice? What does it mean for the SIT probe in the Prajwal Revanna sexual assault case? How does Interpol alert member countries about fugitives?

Sumeda

The story so far:

Amid a political storm in Karnataka over grave allegations of sexual abuse against Prajwal Revanna, sitting Hassan MP and grandson of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, the International Criminal Police Organisation, commonly known as Interpol, has issued a blue corner notice against the absconding politician. The MP has been on the run since late last month following the leak of thousands of explicit video clips that allegedly show the 33-year-old sexually abusing multiple women, prompting the JD(S) to suspend him.

How does the Interpol alert countries?

The Interpol is an inter-governmental law enforcement organisation which assists and facilitates cooperation between national law forces in 196 member countries to combat transnational crimes. The organisation shares information regarding crimes and wanted criminals globally, and provides technical, operational, and investigative support to locate fugitives.

It manages a database of critical data about wanted criminals, which member countries can use to trace such individuals.

The agency has a National Central Bureau in all member countries which is a single point of contact between law enforcement agencies of that country and Interpol.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is officially designated as the nodal agency for India.

The agency uses a 'colour-coded' system to alert and share requests for crime-related information among member countries and global organisations. Notably, member countries are not bound by international law to abide by Interpol notices as they are entirely discretionary.

Why did Interpol issue a blue corner notice against Prajwal Revanna?

The international organisation issues a blue corner notice when the case is related to missing persons. Also called an "enquiry notice," such an alert is sent for additional information from member states about a person, to verify their identity, location, or criminal record concerning a criminal investigation.

It is different from a red corner notice, considering that the purpose of a blue notice is information about a person of interest in an investigation, while the former is generally issued against a person wanted for extradition, or serve a sentence based on a court decision, or a similar lawful action.

Interpol issued a blue corner notice against Mr. Revanna after the Special Investigation Team (SIT) formed by the Karnataka government sought the help of the CBI for further inquiry.

The SIT first issued a look out circular against the Hassan MP after he failed to appear before the panel.

The request came days after the Hassan MP remained untraceable. As per reports, the MP left for Munich, Germany using his diplomatic passport a day after his constituency went to the polls in the second phase of the Lok Sabha elections on April 26, and hours before the SIT was constituted.

Mr. Revanna's advocate sought seven days for his client to present himself before the panel.

The investigating team, however, ruled out the possibility and moved for a blue corner alert against Mr. Revanna, considering that the investigation is in the early stages and the police are yet to file criminal charges.

The SIT officials told Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah that they intend to arrest the accused to expedite the investigation as soon as they receive information about his whereabouts.

THE GIST

- Prajwal Revanna, sitting MP and grandson of former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, is accused of sexual abuse, prompting his suspension from JD(S).
- Interpol has issued a blue corner notice against him. Blue corner notices are issued for missing persons to gather information about their identity, location, or criminal record for ongoing investigations.
- The Special Investigation Team formed by the Karnataka government sought CBI's help in the case, leading to the issuance of the blue corner notice.

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KSRTC to revamp Airavat fleet with 40 club class, sleeper buses

Passengers have been urging the corporation to remove the old fleet of Airavat buses, as they have failed to deliver the promised experience encapsulated in the Airavat service's tagline: 'Sleep like a baby'

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

After a long time, the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) is set to purchase new Airavat Club Class buses and Airavat sleeper buses into its fleet, enhancing the comfort of long-distance travellers.

The KSRTC, which hasn't introduced any new Airavat buses for almost five years, has now issued a tender to induct 40 new buses to replace the old Airavat ones.

The premier services provided by KSRTC have garnered numerous accolades for the corporation. However, passengers have been urging the corporation to remove the old fleet of Airavat buses, as they fail to deliver the promised experience encapsulated in the Airavat service's tagline: "Sleep like a baby".

Speaking to *The Hindu*, a senior corporation official said, "We have issued a tender to acquire new Airavat buses, which will replace the older ones shortly. A total of 40 multi axial buses will be procured through the tender."

According to their policy, the corporation retires an AC bus after it has travelled more than 13 lakh km.

Currently, KSRTC operates 8,234 buses, including 473 premium buses.

Premium buses of KSRTC

Type of bus	Number of buses
Airavat	52
Club Class	303
Ambari	26
Dream Class	42
Ambari Utsav	20
City Single Access	30
Total	473

Source: KSRTC

According to its policy, the corporation retires an AC bus after it has travelled more than 13 lakh km. Currently, KSRTC operates 8,234 buses, including 473 premium ones

Officials said that these buses will be 15-metres-long, long-distance travel buses powered by BS-VI engines.

Features of the fleet

Each bus will feature seats for maximum comfort, all air-conditioned and equipped with berths. These berths will have PU cushions made of CFC-free material, at least 75 mm thick, and upholstered with Grade-1 quality rexene.

Each passenger berth will include a pillow, and luxury/executive-type backrest with an ergonomically contoured profile will be provided for all passenger berths.

Three cameras

The buses will also come with three cameras: one facing the front for traffic monitoring, one at the rear for parking, and one in the gangway area to keep a tab on the movement of passengers.

Additionally, the buses will be equipped with Vehicle Location Tracking with emergency panic buttons and a fire detection and suppression system.

HC gives nod for continuing probe against 26 bookies of BTC

FROM THE COURT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka has given the green signal for continuing investigation against 26 bookies operating in Bangalore Turf Club Ltd.(BTCL) for allegedly evading tax and illegally collecting betting amount.

Justice S. Vishwajith Shetty passed the order while rejecting the petitions filed by Surya and Co. and 25 other bookies. The petitioners had questioned the legality of the first information report (FIR) registered against them in January.

"The allegations found in the first information report and the material collected by the investigation officer during the investigation *prima facie* make out a cognizable offence against the accused. The allegations against the accused are of a very serious nature and the accused, among other allegations, allegedly have misappropriated crores of money collected by them towards payment of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and Tax Deducted at Source (TDS)," the court observed.

The court permitted the continuation of the investigation by vacating its January 29 interim order of stay due to which the probe was stalled.

Background

An inspector of the Central Crime Branch, based on credible information about illegality in the BTCL, had conducted a preliminary verification at the club and later registered the FIR at High Grounds Police Station on January 13.

It was alleged in the FIR that some of the bookies, who had secured the licence from the State government, were found allegedly evading crores of rupees of tax by not maintaining proper records and the register on collection and deposit of GST and TDS. And some of the unlicenced bookies were indulging in the illegal collection of betting amounts from punters in connivance with some of the staff of the BTCL.

It was pointed out in the FIR that on January 12, after four races, the police had seized ₹3.45 crore from the bookies. It was found during the preliminary investigation that only ₹24.96 crore was collected by bookies from 1,507 races conducted at the BTCL between June 1, 2023 and January 18, 2024.

If the average of a day's collection of the race approximately comes up to ₹1,302.57 crore, and therefore there is a huge difference of amount reported by the accused bookies for this period, it was alleged by the police.

Three-week Mango Mela at Lalbagh to begin on May 23

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The annual Mango Mela in Lalbagh Botanical Garden, the one-stop destination for different varieties of mangoes, will begin on May 23. The decision was taken by Karnataka State Mango Development and Marketing Corporation Limited (KSMDMCL) after a meeting of all the stakeholders, including farmers, on May 9.

The mela will be open to visitors for three weeks. Over 100 farmers from across Karnataka are expected to participate. Around 50 mango stalls and 15 jackfruit stalls will be set up at the mela.

"The number of stalls is fewer this time due to poor supply, but good quality mangos will be available at the mela," said C.G. Nagaraju, Managing Director, KSMDMCL. The Kari Ishad, mango variety from Ankola in Uttara Kannada district that bagged the Geographical Indications (GI) tag in 2023, is expected to be available at the mela. The variety is considered as one of the finest quality mangoes because of its unique aroma and luscious taste, apart from a high amount of pulp.

"Other famous varieties, like Kesar from Koppal, Badami from Chitradurga and Tumakuru, will also be available. Farmers from the major mango growing regions like Kolar, Ramanagara, Chikkaballapur and Bengaluru Rural will bring varieties like Raspuri and Thothapuri," Mr. Nagaraju said.

A smaller version of the Mango Mela was organised under the name Mango Utsav earlier in April for four days, in National College ground. The event had attracted thousands of mango lovers.

Rates to be higher

With a dip in yield this time, consumers have been complaining of higher prices of mangoes this year with good quality fruits costing around ₹250 per kg.

According to a source in the mango board, the rate of mangoes even at the mela will be on the higher side this time.

Timings
BENGALURU

FRIDAY, MAY. 10		
RISE	05:56	SET 18:36
RISE	07:36	SET 21:02
SATURDAY, MAY. 11		
RISE	05:55	SET 18:37
RISE	08:33	SET 22:01
SUNDAY, MAY. 12		
RISE	05:55	SET 18:37
RISE	09:33	SET 22:56

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	35	26
Mysuru	38	24
Bengaluru	34	22

Bengaluru Today
34°C Morning will be pleasant Day will be warm and uneasy. Night also will be comfortable. Chances of light rain & thunder shower at few places.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
35°C Weather will be dry. Day will be warm with uneasy afternoon. Night will comfortable.

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THE HINDU
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Three held on murder charge

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In a swift action, the Banasawadi police arrested a gang of three who along with others hacked a 40-year-old former rowdy sheeter Karthikeyan, who had turned a new leaf, to death over an old rivalry on Tuesday.

The accused - Dharma, Ishaq, and Sultan - part of an opponent gang were tracked down based on the CCTV footage and local intelligence on Thursday.

However, the prime accused in the case who is also a rowdy sheeter is on the run.

According to the police, the accused confronted Karthikeyan on ITC road in Banasawadi and hacked him to death in full public view.

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IN THE LIMELIGHT

Changing landscape: Banner advertising *Bridgerton* TV Series is displayed. GETTY IMAGES

Breaking boundaries: the cultural shifts in cinematic depictions of love and desire

Various films and series, ranging from classics to contemporary productions show the changing landscape of sex and sexuality in English cinema, spanning from the liberated '70s to the more conservative '90s and the recent resurgence of openness in the 21st century

Mini Anthikad Chhibber

A perusal of the English movies turning 50 this year, shows examples of classic and camp. Where 1974 saw the release of *China Town, The Godfather Part II*, two Mel Brooks comedies – *Young Frankenstein* and *Blazing Saddles*, two Agatha Christie adaptations – *Murder on the Orient Express* and *Ten Little Indians* and three disaster films – *The Towering Inferno, Airport 75* and *Earthquake*, incidentally all blockbusters, the year also featured R-rated comedies (*Flesh Gordon, Going Places* and *The Swinging Cheerleaders*), an erotic drama, *Julia* and the grindhouse gem, *Wide Open*.

That was the lurid '70s, one can always say superiorly. By the late '80s, the fear of AIDS punished all forms of perceived deviant sexual behaviour with boiled bunnies and ice picks. The Michael Douglas triptych of *Fatal Attraction* (1987) *Basic Instinct* (1992) and *Disclosure* (1994) all figured a man paying dearly for a momentary lapse of reason. *Disclosure* incidentally is so much fun for all its delicious '90s tech stuff including Douglas' character being miffed at not heading the CD-ROM division!

Love and vengeance

Paul Verhoeven's *Basic Instinct*, apart from doing away with underwear during interrogation scenes, was heteronormative with a vengeance – what with the psychopathic bisexual serial killer slicing up entitled rockstars.

Ang Lee's *Brokeback Mountain* (2005) won Oscars for its portrayal of a love that cannot be named.

The fact that the love was between two cowboys, that ultimate symbol of American masculinity, upped the ante several notches. Ten years later it was Todd Haynes' turn with *Carol*, based on Patricia Highsmith's semi-autobiographical novel, *The Price of Salt*.

However, both these movies and several others, still had that heteronormative slant. The lovers and their furtive love mostly did not have happy endings. Simultaneously, there was a depressing sexlessness in mainstream movies with Tom Cruise as its patron saint. And to think that Cruise had starred in Stanley Kubrick's exquisitely erotic *Eyes Wide Shut*!

As the millennium turned 21 and adult, sex was back on screen. The credited presence of intimacy coordinators on set ensures that no one is being exploited – Sharon Stone has repeatedly said she was not aware that she would be revealing quite as much in the infamous interrogation scene.

The second season of *The Deuce*, a show set in the porn industry in the 70s and 80s, was the first to have an intimacy coordinator, and since then *Bridgerton*, exploring love and heaving bosoms in an alternate Regency period, and the cult teen drug and sex drama, *Euphoria*, have followed suit. Michaela Coel dedicated her BAFTA for the hard hitting *I May Destroy You* to her intimacy coordinator.

'All kinds of fun'

Apart from the much-needed weighty discourses on sex and sexuality, there have been films and shows that show sex as all kinds of fun. From *Sex Education*, which looks at horny British teenagers and their elders at Moordale High, to *Minx* set in the world of adult magazines, sex is out there and everyone is having a jolly time of it.

Shows like *Sex/Life*, which follows the fantasies of a suburban housewife and *Obsession*, where Richard Armitage stars as a respectable surgeon whose life gets derailed thanks to a pash for a mysterious young woman, follow the '90s erotic thriller template with sweat, grunts, groans and impossible contortions. *Fatal Attraction's* Adrian Lyne got into the act with another Highsmith adaptation, *Deep Water* (2022), with Ben Affleck and Ana de Armas playing weird games with each other when Affleck's character was not rhapsodising about snails.

And then there is the casual approach to sex on screen best embodied in the blistering forehand delivered by Luca Guadagnino in Challengers.

The movie explores the life, love and sexualities of three tennis players, Tashi, Patrick and Art played by Zendaya, Josh O'Connor and Mike Faist respectively.

The tennis and the sex are explosive and interchangeable. Tashi leaning back to watch Patrick and Art make out, with a satisfied smile at her handiwork, sets the tone for the great looking film.

Realisation, normalisation

The Sandman spin off series, *Dead Boy Detectives*, while not about sex, features Edwin's sweet realisation of his sexuality and a not-so-nice dating experience for Jenny, who runs a niche butcher shop, when her date turns out to be a stone cold killer. The Cat King's attraction to Edwin is naughty and nice.

Highsmith was way ahead of her time, as always, by giving a somewhat happy ending to *The Price of Salt*.

We follow in her illustrious footsteps with the normalising of sex of all persuasions.

If, however, you wish to go old school there is always the '90s. *Fatal Attraction* was rebooted into a vaguely vanilla show and now there is a reboot of that other shocker from the '90s, *Presumed Innocent*, with Jake Gyllenhaal playing Harrison Ford's Rusty Sabich. Saucy does not begin to describe it.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

In May 1962, the popular superhero Incredible Hulk was introduced by Marvel comics. Here is a quiz on the scientist-cum-superhero who became a mainstay in pop-culture

K. Abhinaya

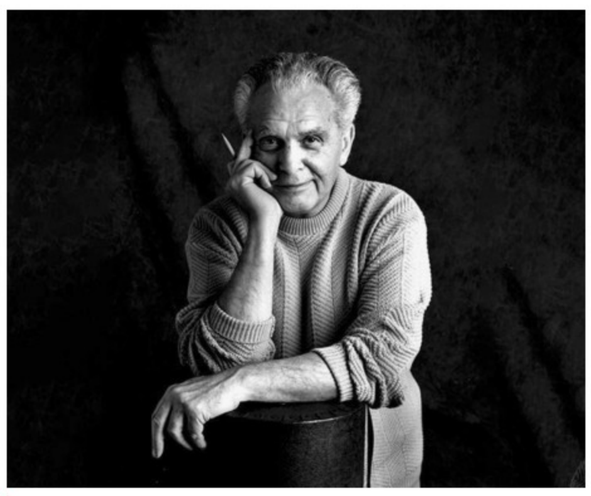
QUESTION 1
Bruce Banner's attempts to save a teenager who runs on the test site of a bomb causing him to get exposed to the gamma rays and sparking his transformation into the Hulk. Name the teenager.

QUESTION 2
In his debut appearance, the Hulk had a different skin colour, but from the second issue, his skin was changed to the now iconic green colour due to certain printing issues. What was the original colour?

QUESTION 3
Bill Bixby, Lou Ferrigno, Eric Bana, Edward Norton, Mark Ruffalo, Tim Roth. Who among them has not played the Incredible Hulk?

QUESTION 4
This Iconic mutant character made his debut in Hulk issue 181. This character has also been a part of a successful film franchise. Name the character.

QUESTION 5
The name of the character was changed in the 1978 Television show titled The Incredible Hulk. Instead of Bruce Banner, the character was called _____ Banner.

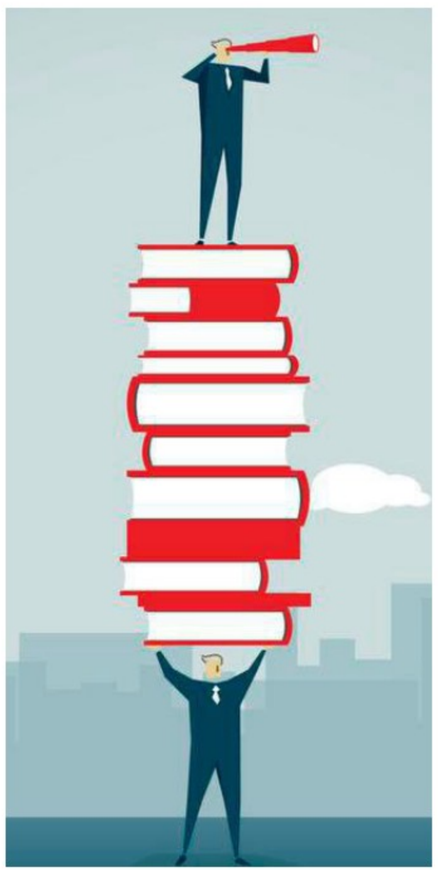


Visual question:
Identify this artist who along with writer Stan Lee co-created the Incredible Hulk. He also earned the moniker King of comics.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:
1. This poet from Ireland was Tagore's biggest promoter in the English-speaking world. Name this poet. **Ans: W.B Yeats**
2. In 2021, there was outrage in India over the renovation of a memorial that was the site of one of the bloodiest incidents in the 1900s. Name this incident. **Ans: Jallianwala Bagh massacre**
3. This Nobel Laureate who is known for his contributions to welfare economics was named by Tagore. **Ans: Amartya Sen**
4. This place was recognised as a World Heritage Site last year. **Ans: Santiniketan**
5. This magazine published several of Tagore's poems, including *Amar Sonar Bangla*, which became the national anthem of Bangladesh. **Ans: Bangadarshan**
6. This film made by Satyajit Ray starring Soumitra Chatterjee competed for the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival. It is based on Tagore's novel of the same name. Name it. **Ans:** *Ghare Baire*

Visual: Name the artist. **Ans: Abanindranath Tagore, his nephew**

Early Birds: Prashant Nain | Rajmohan V | K.N. Viswanathan | Jyot Prakash Gulati | Saheni George | Dipankar Baidya



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subramanian

Valued customer (M. Ramachandran, Kochi)

'Valued' here means 'to have a high opinion of, attach importance to.' A valued customer is a customer who is held in high esteem. A valued friend; a valued officer. 'Valuable' generally goes with things. 'Valuable' means 'of great value, price or worth.'

It is a valuable painting.
He gave valuable advice to her.
His friendship is valuable.

'Valuables' means 'valuable things, especially small personal possessions.'

Peace breaks out (V. R. Moorti, Thiruvananthapuram)

" 'Cambodia – peace breaks out' was a headline shown in the morning news bulletin of Doordarshan. 'Break out' does not go with anything good or pleasant.

War broke out.
A fire broke out.
The thief tried to break out of prison.
He broke out in a rash last night, the doctor says that it is because of some allergy.

Permanent, eternal (S. K. Narang, Patiala)

'Permanent' is the opposite of 'temporary.' A permanent post is a post a person holds till his retirement or death. Permanent damage to something is damage that will remain as long as the thing lasts. That is eternal which has neither a beginning nor an end. The eternal God. 'Eternal' also means 'unchanging, not affected by time.' These are some eternal truths. It also means 'ceaseless, too frequent.'

I am tired of her eternal arguments.
He is sick of their eternal bickerings.

Plethora (A. Vaswani, Raichur)

'Plethora' means 'over-abundance.' It does not just mean 'a lot,' but means 'excessive amount.' It is followed by 'of.'

The report contains a plethora of details.
I don't have the time to plough through the plethora of details.
I had to listen to a plethora of complaints.

The 'e' in the word is pronounced like the 'e' in 'bed,' the 'o' and the 'a' like the 'a' in 'India.' The stress is on the first syllable.

The word is from the Greek 'pletho', be full. In medicine, 'plethora' is 'an abnormal excess of red corpuscles in the blood' or 'any excess of body fluid.'

Published in The Hindu on December 3, 1991

Word of the day

Avarice:
extreme greed for material wealth

Synonyms: materialism, frugality, meanness

Usage: *He was rich beyond the dreams of avarice.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/avaricepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ævəɹɪs/

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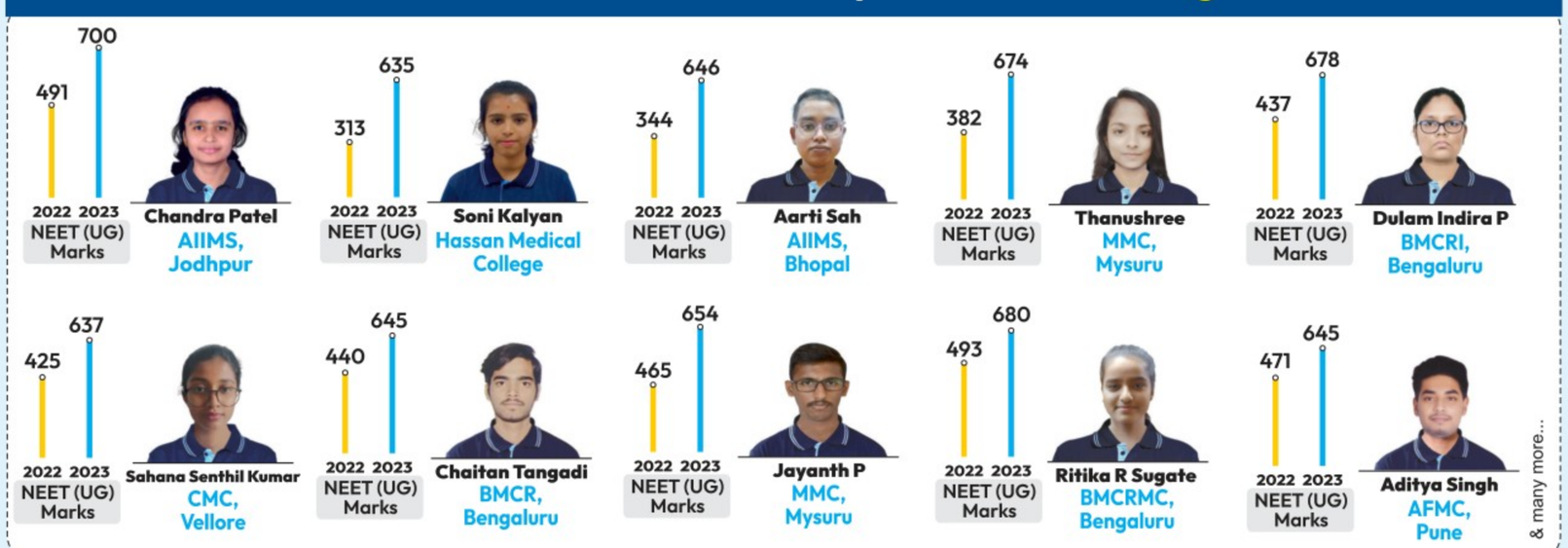

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Milk being taken by farmers to a co-operative society in Malur village, Channapatna taluk, Ramanagara district. BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

(Top) A cowshed at a house in Kempashetty Doddi village, Bidadi hobli in Ramanagara taluk. (Above) Farmers standing in a queue at a milk co-operative society in Hosahalli, Pandavapura taluk, Mandya district. (Below) A farmer with a can of milk heading to a co-operative society in Malur village. BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

From plenty to parched: Dairy farmers' struggle for survival

Drought has hit dairy farmers hard in many districts of Karnataka, where cows have been the source of sustenance even when crops have failed. **Sharath S. Srivatsa** reports on what farmers have to say and how the State-run milk co-operative KMF has responded

Ravi., a dairy farmer in Keelara village in Mandya district in the heart of the Old Mysore region, has been able to earn a supplementary income from the cows that he rears and from the paddy he cultivates. However, the long spell of drought since last year forced him to sell two cows about six months ago because fodder has become difficult to procure.

He now has one cow to ensure milk supply to his own family and he is able to sell only a couple of extra litres to the local milk co-operative society. Though he has a borewell, the water yield has reduced so drastically that he cannot even grow green fodder. Purchasing fodder is out of the question because it is too expensive.

There are similar stories across Mandya, Kolar, Tumakuru, and Bengaluru Rural districts, which contribute the bulk of the Karnataka Milk Federation's (KMF) milk procurement, along with Hassan, Mysuru, and Shivamogga districts in the State.

In Karnataka, about 24 lakh dairy farmers are members of village-level milk cooperative societies, and an unspecified number of non-members also rear cows in the State. The Old Mysuru region in south Karnataka has seen growth in milk production since the milk revolution started in the mid-70s. Affected by the vagaries of monsoon in rain-dependent arid and irrigated areas, dairy farming has brought supplementary income to the farming community, and women's participation is also high.

The failed monsoon in 2023, which led to crop loss, has reduced post-harvest hay availability, while water scarcity has prevented farmers from growing green fodder, triggering a shortage of cow feed. Though the State government issued fodder kits containing seeds to farmers as a drought-mitigation measure, farmers complained that without water, the kit remained unused, and the green fodder wilted in many cases.

Karnataka is currently facing the worst drought in the last four decades, with 223 of the 236 taluks in the State being declared drought-hit. While the previous monsoon's bountiful rainfall helped fill lakes and improve groundwater, which sustained farmers' lives, the onset of summer has brought misery to rural households as a large number of water bodies and borewells have dried up or yielded less water.

Delay in incentive release

Added to their problem is the delay in releasing the government incentive of ₹5 per litre. The government released the last tranche in November 2023, and farmers were hoping to use the subsidy, which was expected later, to counter drought-related financial distress.

Since 2008, the State government has been providing incentives to dairy farmers, and the incentive has increased from ₹2 per litre when it was launched to ₹5 per litre now. The aid has helped draw more farmers to dairy farming, as milk procurement has more than doubled from 2008, when the average daily procurement was 36 lakh kg, to about 81 lakh kg by the end of the 2022-23 financial year.

> Extreme heat has led to low yield of milk, and thereby a drop in income. While I was getting up to 13 litres of milk, it has dropped to less than 10 litres now.
>
> **THULASI KUMAR**
> Farmer in Bangarpet

Milk is being procured from farmers at a cooperative society in Malur village. (Left) Jayakumar, a dairy farmer, at his house at Gejjalagere in Mandya district. BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

While the government incentive does not have specific timelines for release, dairy farmers get their regular payment for milk from the KMF through their respective milk unions. Based on the financial strength of the union, the milk procurement price per litre also varies from district to district. This payment comes to farmers fortnightly through direct benefit transfers to their bank accounts.

"A 50 kg bag of dry feed sold by KMF costs ₹1,260. A tractor load of fodder can cost anywhere from ₹5,000 to ₹10,000. Only farmers who have fodder in excess are selling it. The government has delayed subsidy payments. Enough water and fodder are not available. To make matters worse, milk yield from cows has reduced because of heat," Jayakumar, a farmer in Gejjalgere in Mandya, pointed out.

Drying borewells

In arid Kolar, where farmers are even more dependent on dairy farming to boost their income, the drying up of borewells – the only source of water – has added to the misery. A resident of Siddanahalli in Bangarpet of Kolar district, Thulasi Kumar, said he reduced the cattle head from four to two. "Extreme heat has led to low yield of milk from cows, and thereby a drop in income. While I was getting up to 13 litres of milk from a cow, it has dropped to less than 10 litres. I know of many who have reduced their cattle heads like me. On-time subsidy payment would have helped us," he said.

Tumakuru, another district where dairy farming provides supplementary income, is no different. Dairy provided them with a steady source of income during any kind of distress. But that's no longer the case because of scarcity of water and shortage of fodder. Many, like Jayanna, a resident of Belagarahalli in Tiptur, have kept just one cow to provide for only the family's milk needs.

Those who have grown paddy or sugarcane with great difficulty, with water from the few functional borewells, are the ones who are left with hay, which is taking care of fodder needs. However, Panchalingu, a resident of Keregodu, said dry hay alone does not improve milk yield.

"I have hay from the paddy that I grew last year. However, hay does not help in increasing the milk yield. We are using a combination of *hindi* (local feed) made from grams, ragi, and other locally available proteins. Feed supplied by KMF has become expensive," he complained. Farmers are selling cow dung to get as much additional income as possible though they will require dung as fertilisers for the coming monsoon, he added.

Dairy farmers like Lakshamma, a resident of Keelara, who do not have land to grow fodder, are dependent on stray fodder available in the village in open fields. But they have now dried up.

"Dairying is an important source of livelihood. I also work as a farm hand. It is difficult to maintain cows without having land. Buying fodder is not financially viable. I graze cows on the fringes of the village with whatever I get." Lakshmamma has three cows, and she said she has asked her two sons to look after one cow each.

Low milk procurement

A 50-year-old, reasonably sized milk cooperative society in the temple town of Melukote, in Mandya district, has been recording low milk procurement since March end. From 14 cans of around 40 litres each, it has come down to eight or nine cans daily.

Those in the know about developments in the dairy industry say farmers began selling cows last year as dairying became unremunerative. One reason was the delay in increasing the procurement price. KMF has been making multiple proposals to increase the retail price of milk since the BJP government. Finally, in July last year, the current Congress government allowed a hike in retail price by ₹3 per litre in July 2023, most of which is transferred to the farmers.

The BJP government was said to have delayed a price increase during an election year, fearing a backlash from the middle class. KMF sources said it was during that period that farmers resorted to selling cows because of increased input costs and dipping incomes. In July 2023, when the retail price was finally increased, the KMF had justified that despite the retail price hike, milk prices in Karnataka continued to be cheaper than in the neighbouring states.

In contrast to the farmers' claim that the yield from their cows has reduced, the KMF sources say the total procurement across the State has actually increased over the last summer while the number of farmers supplying milk has remained almost the same.

KMF has over 24 lakh dairy farmer members across 14,000 milk cooperative societies in the State. According to KMF data, it makes a daily payment of over ₹17 crore. KMF is the second largest dairy cooperative in the country, and in South India, it stands first in terms of procurement as well as sales and milk-based products.

"In fact, we have seen over 4% growth. From 77.5 lakh litres of daily procurement, it has gone up to 82 lakh litres. Once the monsoon starts, we expect the total procurement to be around 95 lakh litres, though we hope to touch the one crore mark."

Dues from previous govt.

KMF sources said they are saddled with arrears. "Dues to the tune of ₹450 crore remains from the previous BJP government. There is also ₹212 crore pending. Both of which add up to about ₹700 crore. This money was given to the farmers in the previous financial year."

Sources cited the election as the reason for the delay. The government released ₹260 crore earlier this week, while ₹700 crore (of the latest tranche) is still pending and will be released in the next quarter.

(With additional inputs by Jahanvi T.R.)

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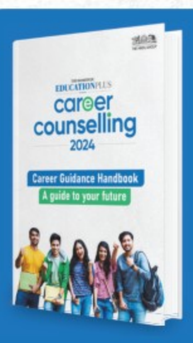

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Ankita Basappa Konnur 625/625
Morarji Desai Residential School, Bagalkot

When you are in your house, you are expected to help with domestic chores, and to attend various events in your family and village. But when you are in a hostel, studying is the only task before you.

Medha P. Shetty 624/625
Holy Child English High School, Bengaluru

I studied every day, and I never set time limits for my revision. I always studied until I had covered the syllabus. I might try re-evaluation for my Sanskrit paper where I lost a mark.

Harshita D.M. 624/625
Sri Vasavi English High School, Tumakuru

I lost one mark in mathematics, and I knew I would lose it. My school provided good quality coaching from 8 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. and my parents were very supportive. I credit them for my result.

Chinmay G.K. 624/625
Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara English Medium High School, Dakshina Kannada

He took no tuition and emerged among the second toppers through self-study, says M.R. Hemalatha, Headmistress of the school.

Siddanth Naikaba Gadage 624/625
Acharya Subalasagar High School, Belagavi

School removed the fear of examinations by holding practice exams every week. Real-time examinations were held in the last month before the final ones. That was really helpful.

Darshan Subray Bhat 624/625
Government Marikamba High School, Uttara Kannada

Because of the support and encouragement by parents and teachers, I have achieved this feat. I had the habit of re-reading completed lessons the same day. My dream is to become a good engineer.

Chinmayi Shreepad Hegde 624/625
Siddhivinayak High School, Uttara Kannada

I did not put in extra effort as such but ensured that I studied for three hours daily. I want to become a professor and my inspiration is T.S. Venkannayya, Mysore university's first Kannada professor.

Shriram K.M. 624/625
Sri Sharadamba English Medium High School, Uttara Kannada

My preparation began from day one for the examinations but I did not have a specific timetable as such. I dedicated sometime every day. My parents and teachers were very supportive.

From Page One

SSLC annual exam-1: Pass percentage declines by 10.49 points

Speaking at a press conference to announce the results, Ritesh Kumar Singh, Principal Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL), said: "For the first time, a new system of webcasting through CCTVs was introduced at all examination centres. Control rooms were set up in all districts for monitoring the live feed. This has been a path-breaking innovation and has restored exam integrity and inculcated a habit of writing exams without resorting to unfair practices. Therefore, the results decreased. However, these measures are student-friendly and it has been welcomed by stakeholders."

The data provided by the department shows that as many as 1,65,443 students secured 'C' grade (35%-49%), which comes to 23.66% of the overall results. This number was 19,301 (2.80%) the previous year. "A majority of 'C' grade students were able to pass because of grace marks," said an official. "We have no intention of failing any students. From next year, teachers and students will be better prepared for the new system and enhanced normalisation will not be necessary. As a remedial measure, the Education Department will take up curative teaching in the next one month for all students who haven't done well in exam-1 or who want to improve their marks so that they are better prepared for exam-2 and -3. Students need not worry as they have two more exams," Mr. Singh added. But the decision to promote students by providing grace marks has attracted criticism from some quarters.

Niranjanaradhya V.P., development educationist, said the result showed the sad state of affairs in Karnataka in relation to quality education.

"This is a cumulative effective of the learning crisis in the State right from primary school. This reflects on the decision of unscientific teachers' transfer, the large number of teacher vacancies, and the absence of a defined road map for enhancing the quality of education right from primary school. The result provided a good opportunity to reflect where exactly we have failed. One thing is for sure and that is installing webcast cameras will not enhance our results," he said.

"Despite taking measures to improve the learning levels among children and by introducing a detention policy as per RTE Amendment Act, the department is bringing the quality of education down," said D. Shashi Kumar, general secretary of the Associated Management of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka.

INBRIEF

Girls fare better than boys

Of the 8,59,967 students who appeared for the exams, 6,31,204 cleared the exam 1. Continuing the trend, girls fared better than boys; of the 4,23,829 girls who appeared, 3,43,788 passed, while of 4,36,138 boys, 2,87,416 cleared the exam. The pass percentage of girls is 81.11 and boys is 65.8%.

SSLC results: Only one student gets full marks, seven share second spot

Ankita, the topper had no access to a mobile phone in the hostel. She made use of the digital library in the school. She credits her success to studying every day

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

While only one student, Ankita Basappa Konnur, scored cent percent marks this year in the SSLC examination, seven students shared the second position by securing 624 marks out of 625. Coming from various districts of the State, these students aspire to become doctors, civil servants, and engineers.

Ankita, who studied at a Morarji Desai Residential School in Bagalkot district, comes from an agricultural family. Her father Basappa Konnur is a farmer in Vajramatti village and owns six acres of land. Her mother Geetha is a homemaker who works on their family farm occasionally.

Ankita had no access to a mobile phone in the hostel. She made use of the digital library in the school. She credits her success to studying every day. She would wake up around 5 a.m. and study for at least two hours before attending classes. On returning from school, she would revise the lessons learned that day before joining the others in playing games on the school grounds in the evening.

"When you are in your house, you are expected to help with domestic chores and to attend various events in your family and village. But when you are in a hostel, studying is the only task before you," she said. She wants to pursue science in pre-university, complete a course in engineering and then serve the nation as an IAS officer.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah also congratulated Ankita for her result. "Ankita who has emerged as the only student to score 625 out of 625, will be an inspiration to the children of the country. I wish that Ankita's educational path will continue to be full of achievements and that she will grow to be a great asset to society," he said.

Siddanth Naikaba Gadage from Acharya Subalasagar High school in Shedabal village near Chikkodi educational district in Belagavi, who also comes from an agricultural family, scored 624 out of 625. He cycled six kilometres to his school every day. He credited the innovative study method at his school where students read a chapter and picked what they thought were important questions, for his results. "We had to frame 20 questions every day from all important subjects. The school removed the fear of examinations by holding practice examinations every week. Real-time examinations were held in the last month before the final examinations. That was really helpful," he said. He aspires to become an IAS officer.

Daughter of guard

Jahnavi S., who scored 623 out of 625 from Belluru Kamalamma Subbanna Vidya Bhavana High School in Mysuru, is the daughter of Shivakumar, a security guard at a medical college.

"I was expecting this result since I had done well in the examinations," she said crediting the result on a focused approach towards her studies.

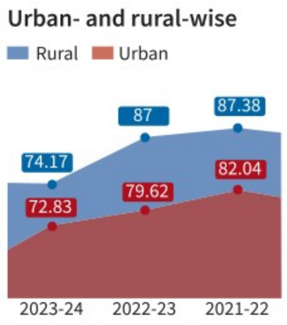
She aspires to take up science in pre-university education and graduate as a Computer Science engineer. "I aim to finish my engineering and take up a job immediately to support my family," she said.

Overall results

Year	No. of students who appeared	No. of students who passed	Pass %
2023-24	8,59,967	6,31,204	73.4
2022-23	8,35,102	7,00,619	83.89
2021-22	8,60,164	7,32,268	85.13
2020-21	8,71,443	8,71,442	99.99

Gender-wise results

Urban- and rural-wise



Top five and bottom five district results

District	Pass %
Udupi	94
Dakshina Kannada	92.12
Shivamogga	88.67
Kodagu	88.67
Uttara Kannada	86.54
Raichur	61.2
Koppal	61.16
Bidar	57.52
Kalaburagi	53.04
Yadgir	50.59

Udupi occupies top spot with 94% results

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Udupi district, which was in the 14th place in the 2023 class 10 results, took the first place with 94% result in the district-wise performance this year. Dakshina Kannada occupied the second place with 92.12% result. It had been in the 17th place the previous year. But what caught the most attention was Shivamogga, the native district of Minister for the Department of School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa, which jumped from 28th position to top 3rd, which it is sharing with Kodagu. Chitradurga, which was in the top position last year, has slipped to the 21st place. Districts belonging to the Kalyana Karnataka region - Raichur, Koppal, Bidar, Kalaburagi and Yadagir - occupied the 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th and 35th place respectively.

SNIPPETS

SSLC annual exam-2 will be held from June 6

The Karnataka State Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) has decided to conduct the SSLC annual exam-2 from June 7 to 14, across the state and it announced the examination schedule.

Failed candidates and students who want to improve their marks can write the exam-2. Students can register for exam-2 through the schools or online on KSEAB portal. May 16th is the last date for applying the application.

SSLC exam-2 schedule

June 7: First language-Kannada, Telugu, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, English, Sanskrit. June 8: Third language-Hindi, Kannada, English, Arabic, Urdu, Sanskrit, Konkani, Tulu. June 10: Mathematics. June 12: Science. June 13: Second language- English, Kannada. June 14: Social Science

Applying for photocopies

May 16 is the last date to apply for a scanned copy of the answer scripts of SSLC annual exam 1. The students can apply for revaluation and re-totaling from May 13 to 22.

Rural and urban students

Rural students outperformed their urban counterparts with an overall pass percentage of 74.17. As many as 72.83% urban students manage to pass. Unaided private schools recorded an overall pass percentage of 86.46, wherein government schools came out with 72.46% and aided schools scored 72.22%.

Zero and 100% results

A total of 78 schools got zero results in Class 10 exam 1 this year.Of the 78, three schools were government, 13 aided and 62 unaided schools. The number of schools securing 100% results has reduced from 3,823 to 2,288 this time. This includes 785 government, 206 aided and 1,297 unaided schools.

First, second, and third languages

In the first language, 7,664 students secured full marks, which is 50% less compared to the previous year. In the second language, this number is 5,593 as against the 9,754 in 2023.In the third language, 10,890 students scored 100 out of 100 and it was 16,170 last year.

The Hindu Education Plus Career Counselling from tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 22nd edition of The Hindu Education Plus Career Counselling 2024 will be held at eight locations in Karnataka from May 11.

The event will provide guidance on the UPSC exam, CET counselling, and NEET Counselling from the Karnataka Examination Authority while also providing career guidance on courses in Arts, Science, Commerce, Law, Fashion Designing, Journalism, Animation, Performing Arts, Management, Engineering, Medicine, and Architecture.

During the event, students and parents will be able to connect with experts and educational institutions. Registration will be between 9 a.m. and 9.30 a.m, and the event from 9.30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Platinum Sponsor is Presidency University and Reva University.

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For details, contact: 9845095781 / 9448160126 / 9448871815. Entry is free. All participating students will get career counselling book free.

The Hindu EducationPlus Career Counselling 2024

Place	Date	Venue	Address
Bengaluru Central	11/05/2024	Sri Jagadguru Renukacharya College of Science, Arts and Commerce	9, Race Course Road, Ananda Rao Circle, Bengaluru
Mangaluru	11/05/2024	Geetha S.M. Shetty Hall	Ramakrishna College, Bunts Hostel Circle, Mangaluru
Raichur	11/05/2024	Navodaya Institute of Technology Auditorium	Navodaya Nagar, Bijanagera Road, Raichur
Mysuru	11/05/2024	Sahukar Chennaiah Auditorium	Vidyavardhaka College of Engineering, P.B. No. 206, Gokulam III Stage, Mysuru
Vijayapura	11/05/2024	BLDECET	BLDEA's V.P. Dr. P.G. Halakatti College of Engineering and Technology, Ashram Road, Adarsh Nagar
Bidar	18/05/2024	Sri Poojya Channa Basava Pattadevaru Rang Mandir	Near district stadium, Bidar
Tumakuru	19/05/2024	Birla Auditorium	Siddaganga Institute of Technology, Tumakuru
Kalaburagi	19/05/2024	Poojya Doddappa Appa Sabha Bhavan	Poojay Doddappa Appa Sabha Bhavan, Sharana Basava University, Kalaburagi

Engineering graduate found dead

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 28-year-old engineering graduate allegedly ends his life by jumping from the top floor of a paying guest accommodation in Ambedkar Nagar in Whitefield on Thursday.

The deceased Arun Patil from Kalaburagi, B.E. computer science graduate, checked into the PG accommodation on Wednesday. He had come to the city to look for a job and was said to be under depression. (*Those having distress or suicidal tendencies can call Arogya Sahayavani on 104 for help*)

Narrow escape for five as car catches fire near Kamalapur

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

A major tragedy was averted in Kamalapur taluk of Kalaburagi district on Thursday after Fire and Emergency Services personnel doused fire that broke out in a moving car.

The incident occurred near Char Kaman on the National Highway near Kamalapur.

As the car caught fire, all the five passengers travelling in the vehicle saved themselves by jumping out of the vehicle.

As per information provided, Mohammad Jaleel of Banjara Hills in Hyderabad of Telangana, who owns the car, and his two friends picked up two more friends from Kamalapur and they were all heading to Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Airport when the vehicle caught fire.

Jaleel's two friends from Kamalapur were supposed to take a flight to Saudi Arabia. In June 2023, in a tragedy that occurred at the same spot, seven people were charred to death when a tourist bus they were travelling in caught fire after colliding with a van. The tourists were travelling back home in Hyderabad from a week-long holiday in Goa.

SHREE SAI GOLD PALACE
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50,000
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Dr. T. A. Sharavana
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*T&C APPLY

भारत सरकार / Government of India
अंतरिक्ष विभाग / Department of Space
द्रवनो दनप्रणाली केंद्र / LIQUID PROPULSION SYSTEMS CENTRE
BANGALORE-560 008.
फोनसं. / Phone No.080 25037171. ई—मेल / Email:purchase@lpscb.gov.in

शुद्धी पत्र / CORRIGENDUM

विज्ञापन संदर्भ सं. एलपीएससीबी/ईओआइ/**01-24** एवं एलपीएससीबी/ईओआई/**02-24** दिनांक **08-04-2024** के अनुक्रम में "रुचि की अभिव्यक्ति" प्रस्तुत करने की निर्धारित तिथि **22-05-2024** तक बढ़ा दी गई है। विवरण वेब पते : "**www.isro.gov.in / tenders and www.lpscb.gov.in**" से डाउनलोड किए जा सकते हैं।

In continuation to the Advt. Ref. No. LPSCB/EOI/01-24 and LPSCB/EOI/02-24 dated 08/04/2024, the due date for submission of EOI is extended upto 22.05.2024, the details shall be downloaded from the webaddress : "**www.isro.gov.in / tenders and www.lpscb.gov.in**"

हस्ताक्षरित / Signed, क्रय व भंडार अधिकारी / Purchase & Stores Officer

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No.: Maintenance_Snt_ ADSTE_I Dated : 03-05-2024

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work

Item of work	Approx. Value
S&T maintenance contract over jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer /I/ Bengaluru section for 2 years in Bengaluru Division.	Rs. 2,90,07,827.08

Last date for submission of bids : **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 27-05-2024**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/ Bengaluru
PUB/60/AAD/PRB/SWR/2024-25

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that our client **Mrs.M.Gajalakshmi W/o. Mr.R.Ramesh Babu** is intending to purchase the schedule property mentioned hereunder from **Mr.John Varkey S/o. Late.N.Varkey** any person/s, Bank, Financial Institutions etc objecting for the proposed purchase or are having any right, title, interest or any type of claim over the scheduled property is hereby called upon to file their objections/claims what so ever along with documentary proof on or before **7 days** from the date of publication of this notice with the under mentioned advocate failing which; our client shall proceed and complete the sale transaction with the above stated person.

PROPERTY SCHEDULE:

All that piece and parcel of the property bearing Site **No. 12,** Katha No.84,carved out of syno.31/1, of **BAIRATHI Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bengaluru East Taluk,** now comes within the limits of BBMP, Bengaluru, measuring EAST to WEST: 30 feet and NORTH to SOUTH: (52 + 55)/2 feet, in all total measuring **1605 sq.ft.**, and the bounded on:

EAST BY : Site No. 11, WEST BY: Site No. 13, NORTH BY: Private Property, SOUTH BY: Road.

C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES
Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B.
Advocates & Legal Consultants Bangalore-43
M: 9845846428, 080-48658774

SOUTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

Follow us on @SCRailwayindia
Details of the Tender Notices of S.C.Railway can be seen on our website: www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

e-procurement Tender Notice No. TENDER NO-TP245004 PUB/0433

In-Sleeper Electro - Mechanical Point Machine manufacturers are requested to visit Railway Web site **www.ireps.gov.in** in which e-tender pertaining to Track Procurement section of South Central Railway, Engineering Head Quarters (PCE/OL/SC) for procurement of In-Sleeper Electro-Mechanical Point Machine is published and tender documents are available. Tenderers are requested to submit their offers online through IREPS website only.

Full details of Tenders may be seen in IREPS website

Dy.Chief Engineer/TP/ HQ/Secunderabad
A0554

For further tender conditions / details and for downloading the tender documents, please visit website at www.ireps.gov.in http://www.scr.indianrailways.gov.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients are intending to purchase the properties morefully described in the schedule herein below from **(I)** Mrs. Lalitha.N, W/o. Sri. Krishnadas Balaji Srinivas, Aadhaar No.533887868763, residing at No.303, Kanakapura Main Road, 7th Block, Banashankari IInd Stage, Bengaluru -70, and **(II)** Mrs. K.R.Sudhamani, W/o.Sri. C.N.Mohan, Aadhaar No.341422095113, residing at No.328/B, 2nd floor, 5th Main, 14th Cross Road, Sadashivanagar, Bengaluru - 80, as they claim that they are the absolute owners in possession of the Schedule Properties and the same are free from all encumbrances, charges, claims, or demands of whatsoever nature.

Any person/s having an objection to the transaction may lodge their objection/s supported by cogent documents with the undersigned within **FIFTEEN DAYS** from the date of this notice. If no objection/s is/are raised within the said period, my client would go ahead with the sale transaction in respect of the properties below mentioned deeming there is/are no objection/s from whomsoever and of whatsoever nature.

SCHEDULE PROPERTIES

ITEM NO.1 - ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF immovable residentially converted land bearing **Sy No.83** [converted vide. Official Memorandum bearing No.584292 dated 22/01/2024, passed by the Deputy Commissioner, Bengaluru (R) District] **measuring 01:15 (A/G),** situated at **Kurubarakunte Village,** Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, which is bounded on:

East by : Land in Sy No.84; West by : Land in Sy No.70 & 71; North by : Land in Sy No.30& 85; South by : Land in Sy No76, 77, 78, & 79.

ITEM NO.2 - ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF immovable agriculture land bearing **Re-Sy No.85/3** measuring 00:14 (A/G) out of 00:24.08 (A/G), **Kurubarakunte Village,** Kasaba Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bengaluru Rural District, which is bounded on:

East by : Remaining portion of land in Re-Sy No.85/3; West by : Land in Sy No.86; North by : National Highway 207; South by : Land in Sy.No.83.

From : V. C. Chandan, Advocate, LEGAL EYES, Advocates & Solicitors, No.892, 'Prathama', 8th A Main Road, 3rd Stage, 3rd Block, Basaveshwaranagar, Bengaluru-560 079. Mob : +91-90360-05454 Email: chandangowda21gmail.com
Bengaluru, Date: 09/05/2024

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No.: SignalMaintenence_ ADSTEII Dated : 04-05-2024

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work

Item of work	Approx. Value
South Western Railway -Bengaluru Division - Maintenance of S&T assets in the jurisdiction of Assistant Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer /II/ Bengaluru over Bengaluru Division for 2 years.	Rs. 4,15,14,845.22

Last date for submission of bids : **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 27-05-2024**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/ Bengaluru
PUB/61/AAD/PRB/SWR/2024-25

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that our client **Sri.Muralidhar Gupta.R. S/o.Late.S.Ramaiah Shetty,** aged about 66 years, Aadhaar No.3432 7464 5370, residing at Skanda Nilaya, 1st Main Road, 3rd Cross, New Extension K.R.Puram, Bangalore-560036, represents that the Sale deed dated 27.02.1978, Registered as Document No.5241/1977-78, in the office of Sub Registrar Bangalore South Taluk, executed by **Sri.K.C.Ramakrishnaiah Shetty and others** to in favour of **Sri.S.Ramaiah Shetty** in respect to the Schedule Property mentioned hereunder is lost/misplace and not traceable.

If anybody other than the said **Sri.Muralidhar Gupta.R** has any claim, right, title and interest on the **SCHEDULE PROPERTY** by virtue of being in possession or above said Original Hakkupathra, or any Rights they should file their claim with documentary proof within **SEVEN DAYS** from the date of issuance of this Public Notice in our office, at the address mentioned below, failing which, it will be taken for granted that nobody has any manner of right, title, interest or claim over the **SCHEDULE PROPERTY** other than the said Sri.Muralidhar Gupta.R.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of Property bearing **BBMP Katha No.604,** Old V.P.House List No.216, Situated at **Krishnarajapuram Village, Krishnarajapuram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk**, now comes under the limits of BBMP, Bangalore, Ward No.52, measuring East to West 42 feet and North to South 13 feet, in all measuring **546 Sq.feets.**, together with house thereon and is bounded on the:

East by : 3.5 feet left by the erstwhile vendor out of the same Number and House Property belongs to K.C.Jayarama Shetty;
West by : Road;
North by : House belongs to Lakshmakka;
South by : Property belongs to B.S.Purushothamaraj;

Shruthi.S, Advocate
Unit No.101, 1st Floor,
Opp: to Karnataka Bank,
K.R.Puram, Bangalore-560036.

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY

Commercial Department
Jabalpur Division
No. JBP/C/170/E-Auction/ Misc/24 Date: 07.05.2024

The bids are invited from registered entities on IREPS by Sr. DCM/JBP (ACO) through e- Auction for the commercial/NFR contracts of Earning & Leasing of SLRs. The Catalogues have already been published on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in. The details of upcoming e-Auction of Jabalpur division are as under:- **Category-**Parcel leasing, **Catalogue No.-**JBP-C-Parcel-38, **Asset Details-** Leasing of SLR compartment of Train No. 12192,11265,12160,05705, 11651, 18248, 11754, 22938, 11703, 11756, 22190, 22192, 12186, 05703, 22188, 22162, 12062, 20906, 11464, 11705, 22189, 11706, 12181, 11751, 19014 **Auction Start (Date and Time)-** 21.05.2024 (10.00 Hrs.), **Auction End (Date and Time)-**21.05.2024 (15.20 Hrs.) 1. Bidder are advised to visit website www.ireps.gov.in for more information related to above e-Auction. 2. The bid has been invited through e-Auction Leasing module of IREPS website. 3. All the e-Auction related information as eligibility, scope of work, contract period, terms & conditions of contract etc, are available on IREPS. 4.Bidders can participate in e-Auction only as per the date & timing as indicated in IREPS. 5. All the prospective bidders are requested to visit website www.ireps.gov.in regularly for any corrigendum related to above e-Auction. **For DRM (C)/WCR/JBP**

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान, एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No.: Maintenance_Snt_ DSTE_SBC Dated : 03-05-2024

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work

Item of work	Approx. Value
S&T maintenance contract over jurisdiction of Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer / Bengaluru section for 2 years in Bengaluru Division.	Rs. 2,51,53,187.92

Last date for submission of bids : **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 27-05-2024**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer/ Bengaluru
PUB/59/AAD/PRB/SWR/2024-25

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client is desirous of purchasing all that piece and parcel of the immovable property more fully described in the 'Schedule' hereto and hereinafter referred to as "Schedule Property" with its owners viz., **(1) Mr. Harichand B.** alias B. Harilal alias Harishchand B alias Harichand B. Chugh alias Harichand, **(2) Mr. B. Giridhar** alias Giridhar Bhagwandas Chugh alias Giridhar, **(3) Mr. B. Dhanraj** alias Dhanraj Bhagwandas Chugh alias Dhanraj **(4) Mr.B. Motilal** alias Motilal Bhagwandas Chugh alias Motilal and (5)Mr.B.Prakash alias Prakash B. Chugh alias Prakash all sons of late P. Bhagwandas alias Bhagwandas Pagunmal alias Pagunmal Bhagwandas alias Bhagwandas alias Bhagwandas Chug, residing at No.3, West Park Cross, Road, Kumara Park East Extension, Bangalore 560 001. The Owners have represented to our Client that they are the absolute owners of the Schedule Property, with unrestricted rights of alienation over the same.

Notice is hereby given to the general public that any person/s other than the Owners, asserting any right, title, charge, lien, claim/s or any interest whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Property are hereby called upon to submit to the undersigned, their claim/s, if any, over the Schedule Property or their objections, if any, to the aforementioned transaction. The said claim/s or objections must be submitted in person and in writing, together with all documents evidencing of such claim/s or objections, so as to reach us at the address given below within a period of **21 (Twenty One) days** from the date of publication of this Notice. If no such claim/s or objections are received, it shall be deemed that no one else other than the Owners have any right, title, interest or claim/s in respect of the Schedule Property and our client would be at liberty to proceed with the purchase of the Schedule property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of property bearing No.14 (old), later bearing No. 3 and 3/1, presently bearing No.3, New PID No.77-91-3, situated at West Park Cross Road, Railway Parallel Road, Kumara Park East Extension, Bangalore 560 001, measuring East to West 120 feet and North to South 100 feet, in all measuring 12000 Sq.feet, together with the constructions standing thereon and bounded on: **East by :** Property No.17 (New No.7), **West by:** West Park Cross Road, **North by :** Property No.15 (New No.1 & 2), **South by :** Property No.13.

Sd/- **R. NAGARAJ & ASSOCIATES,**
Advocates
Room No.16, 2nd Floor, No.64/1, Lakshmi Commercial Complex, 1st Main Road, Seshadripuram, Bangalore-560 020.
Date:09-05-2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to notify the General Public, that our client **Mrs.SADIYA,** Wife of Mr. Kazi Sajid Mohammed Sayeed, No.6/2, 2nd Floor, "WOOD HAVEN", 1st Cross, Da Costa Layout, Cooke Town,Bangalore-560 005, has either lost or mislaid the original **(1)** Gift Deed dated 28/03/2013, registered as Document No. HLS-1-05209/2012-13, in Book-I and stored in C.D No.HLSD71, in the Office of Sub-Registrar, Halasuru, Bangalore executed by Mr.Masood Ali and Mrs.Ayesha Masood in favour of Mr.Khuram Masood, **(2)** Special Power of Attorney dated 28/03/2013, registered as Document No. HLS-4-00622/2012-13, in Book-IV and stored in C.D No.HLSD71, executed by Mr.Khuram Masood in favour of Mr.Masood Ali, **(3)** Sale Deed dated 02/07/2013, registered as Document No. HLS-1-01739/2013-14, in Book-I and stored in C.D No.HLSD80, executed by Mr.Khuram Masood in favour of Mrs.Sadiya, **Nos.1 to 3** all registered in the Office of Sub-Registrar, Halasuru, Bangalore and **(4)** Khatha Certificate and Khatha Extract in the name of Mr.Khuram Masood, in respect of Property bearing Municipal No.6/2, D Costa Layout, Bangalore issued by BBMP. In this regard a Police complaint is lodged before jurisdictional Police Station, Bangalore on 25/04/2024. Public are hereby notified that if any one finds the documents detailed above, they may deliver the same to the undersigned or to our aforesaid client immediately. If anyone deals with the above referred documents or makes any claim on the basis of it other than our client, he/she/they will not derive any right and will not be binding on our client.

YASEEN BABU,
K.M. LEGAL ADVOCATES,
No.1C, 'WILOCRISA', # 14, Rest House Crescent Road, BANGALORE-560001.
Ph : +91 9845855933
Email: kmlegaladvocates@gmail.com
Place: Bangalore **Date:** 09/05/2024

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **Sri. Venkatesh. D, S/o. Dasachari,** R/at. Vijayanagar, Bangalore, intend to purchase the property bearing sy.no.46, New Sy.No.83 measuring **09 guntas,** situated at **Nagarabavi Village, Yeshwanthpura Hobli, Bangalore North Taluk,** from its owners **Sri. J.C.Ananthmurthy S/o. Savithramma and his family members**. If any person/s or financial institutions having any claim, right, title, interest on the schedule property may file their objections along with documents within **7 days** from today. And thereafter the same shall be treated as no claim whatsoever.

(C.M.RAGHUNATH) Advocate.
No.6/1, S.S. Temple Street, K.P. West, Bangalore-560020 Mob: 9986022999

PUBLIC NOTICE
DOCUMENT MISSING

Notice is hereby given that the Sale Deed dt 21.06.1990, registered as document No.845/1990-91, registered in sub Registrar office, Shivaji nagar, Bangalore, in respect of the Apartment Unit No. S-917, New No. 47/324, PID No. 81-6-47/324, in Ninth Floor of the commercial complex Known as "MANIPAL CENTRE", Dickenson Road, Bengaluru, our client on 30/4/2024 , at commercial street while traveling back in auto to home, has unfortunately lost aforesaid Original document and the same is not traceable. If any body finds or is in possession of the Original Document relating to the said property they are requested to hand over the same to the below address.

H.V.NAVEEN KUMAR RAO&
H.V.SUNIL KUMAR RAO, *ADVOCATES*
No. 57, 1st Floor, Veerapillai Street, Bengaluru-560001 Mob : 9341380225

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that, my client, Mr.Kuzhandaivel S/o.Balakrishnan, Aged about 50 years, residing at No.13/2, Doddamavalli, Sadar Mudalappa Lane, Yeshwanthapura, Bangalore -560004, has LOST THE 1).ORIGINAL SALE DEED DATED 03.11.2003, REGISTERED AS DOCUMENT NO.RJN-1-04992/2003-04 OF BOOK-I, STORED IN CD NO.RJND17, IN THE OFFICE SUB-REGISTRAR, RAJAJINAGAR, BANGALORE, 2).AGREEMENT OF SALE DATED 09.04.2008, REGISTERED AS DOCUMENT NO.YPR-1-00043/2008-09 OF BOOK-I, STORED IN CD NO.YPRD1, IN THE OFFICE SUB-REGISTRAR, YESHWANTHPURA, BANGALORE AND 3). CANCELLATION OF AGREEMENT DATED 04.01.2021, REGISTERED AS DOCUMENT NO.YPR-1-03705/2020-21 OF BOOK-I, STORED IN CD NO.YPRD700, IN THE OFFICE SUB-REGISTRAR, YESHWANTHAPURA, BANGALORE, LOST AT 1ST MAIN ROAD, TRUCK TERMINAL OF INDUSTRIAL SUBRUB IIND STAGE, YESHWANTHPURA, BANGALORE, ON 05.03.2024, BETWEEN 01:00PM TO 02:00PM. A COMPLAINT IS LODGED IN ONLINE DATED 09.05.2024 VIDE LOST REPORT BEARING NO.1046011/2024,
Finders may return the same to the near Police Station or contact at the below address.
if any persons, firm, company, Financial institution or organization has any claim are holding the afore mentioned document, they may contact the below mentioned address in writing within 15 days from the date of this notice failing which it will be presumed that there are no claims.

BHASKAR.M,
ADVOCATES & LEGAL CONSULTANTS,
Office: No.40, 2nd Floor, 71st Cross, near 6th Block Signal, 5th Block, Rajajinagar, Bangalore-560 010 **Land line**: 080-48520073

Office of Managing Director, Bureau for Facilitating MSMEs of Tamil Nadu (FaMeTN)

MSME Department, Government of Tamil Nadu
1st Floor, SIDCO Corporate Office Building, Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai-600032

The following tender proposal may be accessed for appropriate responses

S. No.	Tendering Authority & Bid Submission Portal, Date of Issue and Bid Due Date (BDD) and time	Subject of Request for Proposal (RfP) and EMD
1	General Manager, FaMeTN **www.tenders.tn.gov.in** Date of Issue: 10 May 2024 Bid Due Date & Time: 20 May 2024, 11 am	RFP for the Empanelment of vendor/ service provider for conducting Reverse Buyer Seller Meet. **EMD is Rs. 50,000 each**

All subsequent communications will be available at the site mentioned above. The RfP notifications will also be available at **www.tenders.tn.gov.in.** RfPs can be downloaded till BDD and will be opened on the portal **www.tenders.tn.gov.in** on the respective BDD. The processes are meant to be end-to-end electronic and all submissions except presentations for the RFPs will be entirely online to the maximum extent possible. The responses could be used for empanelling firms and experts for similar projects in FaMeTN, at the sole discretion of the Tender Accepting Authority.

DIPR/1728/Tender/2024 **General Manager, FaMeTN**

MISSING

Vattappara Police Station
Crime 144/2024 U/S 57 of KP Act

Sukhveer Singh age 59 at Santhimandiram, Vettinadu, Vattappara PO, 5 feet tall, Medium complex, Compact body.
If you have any information of the person, please contact immediately the following phone number.

Inspector of Police, Vattappara : **9497947123**
Sub Inspector, Vattappara : **9497980137**
Vattappara Police Station : **0472 2585055**

189/F2/2024/I&PRD

PUBLIC CAUTION NOTICE

This to the notice of the General Public that my client **Sri. M.C. KRISHNA MURTHY,** aged about 80 years, Son of Late. S.M. Chinnappa, residing at No.360, 2nd Main Road, H.M.T. Layout, Anandnagar, Bangalore North Bangalore, Karnataka-560024, have lost the following ORIGINAL registered Sale Deed.

General Power of Attorney	Executed By	In Favor of
Original Registered Sale Deed Dated: 01.02.1990, Document No.3397/89-90, Book-I, Volume No.3475, Pages 9 to 12, registered in the office of the Head Quarter Sub-Registrar Bangalore, Gandhinagar, Bangalore, with respect to Property bearing Site No.360, formed by the HMT Employees' Co-operative House Building Society Limited, Bangalore, Visveswararaiah Nagar (Gangenahalli) Layout, measuring East to West 30 feet or 9.14 Meters and North to South 50 feet or 15.24 Meters totally measuring 166.67 Sq.yds or 139.29 Sq.mtrs.	HMT EMPLOYEES' CO-OPERATIVE HOUSE BUILDING SOCIETY LIMITED, Represented by its Secretary Shri. A.V. Manjunatha Son of Late. A. Venkatadasappa	M.C. Krishna Murthy son of Sri. S.M. Chinnappa

Online Police Complaint of the above loss has been lodged with the Bangalore City Police on 05.05.2024, if any person is in possession / finds the said original Document is hereby requested to return the same to the undersigned and he/she shall be suitably rewarded.

The general public is hereby further cautioned that whoever is in possession of the above said ORIGINAL DOCUMENT has no manner of right, title, interest or claim over the said Property. And if anyone deals with the said person/s regarding the said Property shall be doing so at his/her own peril, risk and consequences and the same shall not be binding on my client.

Place : Bangalore
Date : 09.05.2024

A.P. GURURAJ, Advocate
No.2919/9, 13th Main Road, D Block, 2nd Stage, Rajajinagar, Bangalore-560010. Mob.No.9980100658

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, PAYAL R/at No.24, 2nd Main, N G E F Layout, Sanjayanagar, R M V 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560094 have changed my name to Payal Anil Bhavesh vide Affidavit dated 09.05.2024 sworn before Notary A.Manjula, Bangalore.

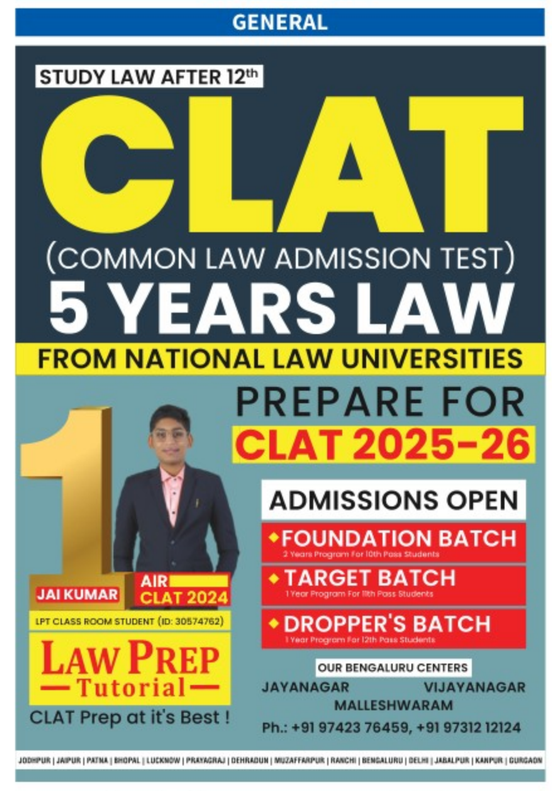
PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, PRAVILJITH PATHRA VALAPPIL S/O Sudhakaran P N R/O S R Nilayam Kovval Cheruvathur Kilayikode Kasaragod Kerala 671313 have changed my minor son's name from NIVIL P NANDITA to NEEV NIVIL aged 7 Years

EDUCATIONAL

GENERAL


STUDY LAW AFTER 12th
CLAT
(COMMON LAW ADMISSION TEST)
5 YEARS LAW
FROM NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITIES
PREPARE FOR
CLAT 2025-26
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TVS HOLDINGS LIMITED

(Formerly known as Sundaram-Clayton Limited)

Regd office: "Chaitanya", No.12, Khader Nawaz Khan Road, Nungambakkam, Chennai 600 006.
Website : www.tvsholdings.com Tel : 044-2833 2115 Email : corpsec@tvsholdings.com
CIN : L35999TN1962PLC004792

STATEMENT OF STANDALONE & CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

(₹ in Crores)

Sl. No.	Particulars	Standalone				Consolidated			
		Quarter ended		Year ended		Quarter ended		Year ended	
		31.03.2024	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023	31.03.2024	31.03.2023
		Unaudited		Audited		Unaudited		Audited	
1	Total Income	407.18	638.42	1,646.56	2,206.72	10,133.78	8,533.53	40,282.02	33,690.33
2	Net Profit / (Loss) before tax (before Exceptional Items)	251.43	150.64	415.19	235.97	742.99	464.14	2,791.49	1,924.47
3	Net Profit / (Loss) before tax (after Exceptional Items)	251.43	176.38	410.12	326.69	742.99	489.88	2,786.42	2,013.32
4	Net Profit / (Loss) after tax (after Exceptional Items)	219.22	161.36	338.74	273.11	463.86	324.03	1,782.38	1,333.17
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income / (Loss) (after tax)]	219.86	161.03	336.08	276.48	418.52	295.52	1,728.28	1,399.02
6	Equity share Capital (Face value of Rs.5/-each)	10.12	10.12	10.12	10.12	10.12	10.12	10.12	10.12
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	-	-	1,439.45	700.43	-	-	2,829.95	3,230.87
8	Earnings Per Share (Face value of Rs.5/-each) (not annualised) (In Rs.)								
	(i) Basic	108.35	79.75	167.43	134.99	114.78	75.90	395.60	321.10
	(ii) Diluted	108.35	79.75	167.43	134.99	114.78	75.90	395.60	321.10

Notes:

1 The above is an extract of the detailed format of financial results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the financial results are available on the Stock exchanges websites (www.bseindia.com and www.nseindia.com) and on Company's website (www.tvsholdings.com).

2 Figures for the previous periods have been regrouped, wherever necessary, to conform to the current period's classification.

For TVS Holdings Limited
Sd/-
Venu Srinivasan
Chairman

Place : Chennai
Date : 9th May 2024

NCW: No victim has lodged complaint against Prajwal

It had taken *suo motu* cognisance of reports circulating in the media in the sexual abuse case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Commission for Women (NCW) said on Thursday that no victim has come forward to register a complaint against Karnataka MP Prajwal Revanna, who has been accused of sexual exploitation of women. The commission said the lone woman complainant, who reached out to it, alleged that she was forced to register a fake complaint against the JD(S) leader.

The police booked Mr. Prajwal Revanna and his father JD(S) MLA and former Minister H.D. Revanna for sexual harassment and criminal intimidation based on a complaint from a woman who worked in their household. Mr. Prajwal Revanna is the BJP-JD (S) alliance candidate for the Hassan Lok Sabha seat, which went to polls on April 26.

Prajwal Revanna

The NCW had taken *suo motu* cognisance of reports circulating in the media in the case and had asked the Director-General of Police of Karnataka to take immediate action within three days.

Action taken report

The commission said in a statement here on Thursday that the timely submission of the action taken report (ATR) by the authorities concerned reveals several significant findings. The ATR indicated the registration of two cases based on the complaints of sexual abuse by the victims, alongside an additional complaint filed for abduction by a relative. However, no victim has come forward to register a complaint with the commission in this case, it said.

The commission said that in a separate development, it has been noted that the 700 women who submitted online complaints are affiliated with a social activist group and have no direct involvement or association with the primary complainant in the case.

We will probe NCW's complaint, says SIT

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the alleged sexual abuse cases involving Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna has launched a probe into a complaint by the National Commission for Women (NCW).

The NCW wrote to the SIT on Wednesday bringing to its notice that a woman had complained to the commission alleging that three individuals in civil dress, claiming to be from the Karnataka police, approached her and tried to force her to give a false complaint in the case.

A senior SIT official clarified that none of the officials of the team had contacted or visited the house of the alleged victim in the case. "We have launched a probe to ascertain the identity of the three individuals who visited the victim's house," he said.

JD(S) petitions Governor seeking his intervention for CBI probe

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Claiming that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the sexual abuse case, allegedly involving Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, was not conducting a transparent probe, a Janata Dal (Secular) delegation on Thursday petitioned Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot seeking his intervention to transfer the case from the SIT to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) besides directing Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to dismiss Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar from the Cabinet.

"Mr. Shivakumar is the mastermind in the distribution of pen drives containing explicit videos. He is involved in the circulation of 25,000 pen drives at public places in Hassan. He has to be dismissed from the Cabinet. The SIT probe is not objective and shows signs of diverting the whole scandal," the petition stated. The JD(S) delegation was led by party State president H.D. Kumaraswamy. "Car driver Karthik had stolen photos from Mr. Prajwal Revanna's phone and was involved in their circulation. He had met the Deputy Chief Minister. Till now, Karthik has not been arrested. An FIR has been filed against Naveen Gowda for circulating the pen drives. The SIT has not arrested anyone so far," the petition stated.

A delegation of JD(S) leaders, led by party State president H.D. Kumaraswamy, submitted a petition to Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot at Raj Bhavan in Bengaluru on Thursday.

The party has also sought dismissal of D.K. Shivakumar from the Cabinet

The petition said the release of videos had caused harm to women victims, who are distressed. "The SIT is conducting the probe with a pre-conceived notion. The conspiracy behind the pen drive distribution has come out in the conversation between BJP leader Devaraje Gowda and Mr. Shivakumar. The SIT is working at the behest of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Mr. Shivakumar to sully the image of the former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda and Mr. Kumaraswamy.

Community name

Meanwhile, the former Chief Minister clarified that he was not using the Vokkaliga community in the scandal, and that his stand on Mr. Prajwal Revanna remains the same. "Those who have committed crime should face the law of the land. Even if someone is big or is in any political party, they should be punished," he told press-persons here. He said the order setting up the SIT has its limitation by not including action against those releasing the explicit contents through pen drives. He also criticised Vokkaliga leaders of the Congress, including Ministers and legislators, who had attacked him on Wednesday.

Three more held in abduction case

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Special Investigation Team (SIT), probing the alleged multiple instances of sexual abuse involving Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, has arrested three more people in the abduction case in which former Minister H. D. Revanna is the prime accused. Mr. Revanna is accused of abducting one of the victims of alleged sexual abuse to prevent her from testifying against him.

The arrested have been identified as Hebbalu Manu, Sujay, and Madhu. Sources in the SIT said the trio held the victim in captivity from April 29 to May 4, when she was rescued by the SIT. The trio moved the victim from one place to another during this period and held her, sources said. The SIT has now taken them into their custody. Their arrest and interrogation are crucial to piece together the sequence of events in the abduction case, sources said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Revanna's bail plea came up for hearing at the Special Court for Elected Representatives, Bengaluru, on Thursday. The arguments in the case were incomplete and the case has been adjourned till Monday. The judicial custody of Mr. Revanna ends on Tuesday. Till then he will continue to be lodged in the Bengaluru Central Prison. On Thursday, Mr. Revanna's counsel C.V. Nagesh completed his arguments in the case and Jayna Kothari, additional special public prosecutor for the SIT, began her arguments but could not complete them. So the case was adjourned till Monday.

H.D. Revanna

Revanna's bail plea hearing has been adjourned till Monday

BJP leader Devaraje Gowda faces sexual assault case

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

BJP leader G. Devaraje Gowda, who is in the news in connection with the sexual abuse case allegedly involving JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, has been accused of sexually assaulting a woman. The Holenarsipur police have registered a case against him based on the woman's complaint on April 1.

The woman, in her complaint, said she and her husband came in contact with Mr. Devaraje Gowda, who is also an advocate, in connection with the sale of a site. Later, he would call her over the phone and had assured her that he would get the work done.

Threatened

Once, he took her to his residence and sexually abused her, the complaint stated. Besides that, he would also make video calls to her. On February 4, he called her over the phone and insisted that she meet him. when she refused, he threatened her that he would circulate the videos and photos featuring them on social media, the complaint stated.

On March 29, an assistant at the BJP office in Holenarsipur called her to collect information about her address. Later in the day, two unknown people visited her house and snatched her phone. The complainant said she possessed video evidence to support her complaint.

The police registered a case under sections 354 (sexual assault), 448 (house trespass), 504 (intentional insult or provocation), and 506 (criminal intimidation), among others, of the IPC against Mr. Devaraje Gowda and Veena, an assistant at the BJP office in Holenarsipur.

The victim's husband also filed a case against Mr. Devaraje Gowda accusing him of scolding him by mentioning his caste and criminal intimidation.

When *The Hindu* contacted Suresh Kumar, circle inspector of Holenarsipur, he said the investigation into the case was going on. "We had served summons to the accused. Both Devaraje Gowda and Veena responded to the summons and appeared for inquiry," the officer said.

Complaint in Bengaluru

Before the complaints were filed against him, Mr. Devaraje Gowda had filed a honey-trap complaint in Bengaluru against three people from Holenarsipur. In his complaint, registered by the Hebbal police on March 28, he alleged that three people video-called him and recorded the conversation. Based on the recorded video, they demanded ₹2 crore from him and threatened that they would release it to the media if he did not pay.

Mr. Devaraje Gowda contested the Assembly election from Holenarsipur in 2023 on the BJP ticket. He often claimed that he possessed videos and photos that could expose Mr. Prajwal Revanna. As the objectionable content was circulated widely on messaging applications, he alleged that the content was released by Congress leaders for political mileage ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.

Hoping for a good catch

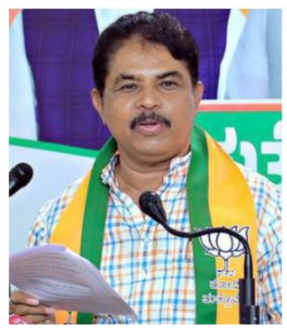
Patient wait: A fisherman at work on the rocky Om Beach at Gokarna in Uttara Kannada district.
K. MURALI KUMAR

BJP terms Siddaramaiah 'lazy'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Referring to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah holidaying in the Nilgiris after hectic campaign for the Lok Sabha elections, the Opposition BJP has described him as "lazy" and alleged that he is enjoying himself. On the other hand, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had "not taken even a single day's leave", the party claimed.

At a press conference here on Thursday, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok said Mr. Siddaramaiah cannot be compared to Mr. Modi, who is a "workaholic".


BJP leader R. Ashok at a press meet in Bengaluru on Thursday.

Referring to the Chief Minister questioning Mr. Modi on various issues, Mr. Ashok said: "Mr. Siddaramaiah has questioned the Prime Minister drinking mineral water and juice in the comfort of AC. But he has not given drinking water to the people of the State and failed to release the incentive to milk farmers and salaries to ambulance drivers and clear the bills of BBMP contractors. The investigation into the murder of Hubballi student Neha is yet to begin."

Meanwhile, the BJP took exception to the controversial remarks of Congress leader Sam Pitroda. Describing those remarks as racist, Mr. Ashok alleged that the Congress was trying to disturb the peace in south India through such remarks. The BJP Yuva Morcha staged a protest in Bengaluru against the remarks.

Rain abates threat of forest fire in Bandipur, Nagarahole

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Moderate to light rainfall over the last three to four days has doused the threat of forest fire in Bandipur and Nagarahole for the year.

This has brought relief to the authorities who were on the edge since February when the forests became bone dry due to the prevailing weather conditions of intense heat accompanied by heatwave during April and the first week of May.

"This was one of the longest and the harshest summers that we faced this year but fortunately, there has been no major incident of forest fire and the threat has passed," said Ramesh Kumar, Conservator of Forests, Project Tiger.

He said all the ranges of Bandipur except Kundukere received good rain during the week and the threat of forest fires has diminished by 90%. "However, the temporary watchers who are recruited from the surrounding villages and tribal colonies to help the regular staff combat the outbreak of fire if any, will stay on for a few more days till Bandipur receives additional spell of rain," Mr. Ramesh Kumar added.

Nearly 500 temporary watchers are roped in from tribal colonies and surrounding villages and are deployed across the 912 sq. km tiger reserve every year. These watchers are deployed during the second week of January and their services are used till April 30 by when the pre-monsoon showers diminish the threat of forest fires.

But this year not only was the heat and severity of the summer intense but even the rains had failed, adding to the drought-like condition in forests. Hence, the services of the fire watchers have not been disbanded at Bandipur and extended.

"We will wait for a few more spells of rain before lifting our guard concerning fire or withdrawing the deployment of temporary fire watchers," said Mr. Ramesh Kumar.

However, at Nagarahole which is contiguous to Bandipur, the recent rain covered the entire swathe of the tiger reserve and the threat of fires for this year is over. "The rain was uniform and widespread covering all ranges of Nagarahole which has eliminated the fire threat. Hence, the services of temporary fire watchers at Nagarahole and their deployment in different zones, have been withdrawn," said C. Harshakumar, Director, Nagarahole Tiger Reserve.

Both Bandipur and Nagarahole have a history of fires wreaking havoc during summers. Still, it has been an incident-free year but for minor fires that were put out without much damage to flora and fauna.

Meanwhile, more rain has been forecast by the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre for Mysuru, Mandya, and Chamarajanagar and it is valid till Friday. The temperature continued to hover around 34° to 36° C.

Though the cumulative rainfall from March 1 to May 9 is on the deficit side, the average for May indicates normal rainfall. Mysuru has received 36 mm of rainfall so far during May and which is 18% above normal while Chamarajanagar has received 33 mm which is 9% above normal, according to the KSNDMC.

A file photo of Bandipur where recent rain has diminished the threat of forest fire for the current year.

Courier scam: RBI officer loses ₹24.5 lakh

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 58-year-old officer with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has become the latest victim of a courier scam. She has lost ₹24.5 lakh to a man who extorted money posing as police officer from Mumbai.

The victim in her complaint said that the man posing as a police officer from Mumbai Crime Branch called on the pretext of an inquiry. The caller said there was a courier in her name containing five passports, three credit cards, a laptop along with 200 grams of MDMA. The caller also claimed that the probe found that she had possible links with a terror suspect. During the call, he asked and accessed the complainant's bank accounts and transferred ₹24.5 lakh.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

V. RAMAMURTHI (85), Retired Senior Administration Officer, The Hindu, Chennai passed away on 09-May-2024. Address: New No:6, Old No:19/1, First street, Rangarajapuram, Srinagar Colony, Saidapet, Chennai-600015. Contact : 97109 14678.

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES

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DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

Don't start with the premise that childbirth is broken, Janhavi Nilekani

Changing the narrative around childbirth is what the Aastrika Foundation has sought to do right from its inception. It aims to establish midwifery as a profession with a trained cadre

INTERVIEW

Janhavi Nilekani

Preeti Zachariah
BENGALURU

In-person training in one of the sessions arranged by Aastrika Foundation. SPECIAL ARANGEMENT

Ensuring a mother and child survive childbirth is the basic minimum. It should not be the ceiling of what you achieve," says Janhavi Nilekani, the founder and Chairperson of the Aastrika Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to transforming maternal healthcare. But the transformation of maternal healthcare in India is far from easy. "Poor quality of maternal healthcare is so normalised in India," she says.

The issue is harder to address, she adds, because it lies at the intersection of poor-quality healthcare and the lack of agency for many women in our country. Changing the narrative around childbirth is what the Aastrika Foundation, which turned five on May 9, has sought to do right from its inception, steadfast in "the belief that all childbearing women must have access to high quality, timely, respectful maternity care and fundamental rights, including privacy, the companionship of a loved one, informed consent, and an abuse-free birthing experience," as the Aastrika website states.

One of the key objectives of the foundation, supported by Nilekani Philanthropies, is to establish midwifery as a profession with a trained cadre. "Midwives bring a lot to the table for every section of society and that is why it was important to us," says Nilekani, a development economist by training. "It is a solution not just for underserved people but also for places with massive amounts of over-intervention."

Janhavi Nilekani.

The Aastrika Foundation currently has several programmes under its umbrella: Aastrika Sphere, their capacity-building programme, their Nurse Practitioners in Midwifery (NPM) programme, part of the Government of India's 2018 midwifery initiative and a robust advocacy and community-building programme. "I think I started with a very clear mission, and we have done a fantastic job–tried to be focused and allowed for organic growth," believes Nilekani.

Edited extracts of an interview

Can you tell me more about the midwifery model of care, something you hope to normalise in both the public and private sectors? Could you also explain the differences between this sort of midwife and the *dais* or traditional birth attendants who've historically been a part of this country's birthing culture?

The midwifery model in the modern sense is a style of approach to childbearing which starts on the premise that pregnancy and childbearing are physiological processes, and the body has evolved, to some extent, to be able to handle it.

Medical approaches such as starting the labour with drugs, using instruments to deliver the baby or resorting to a C-section, should be used only in restricted and justified cases. You start with the premise that the body knows what to do. Don't start with the premise that childbirth is broken, and every childbirth is a death waiting to happen.

There is solid science behind the midwifery model of care. Intervention should be based on data, science and research trials in the midwifery approach, not based on being subjective or what individual practitioners think it should be. Women-centric maternal care is prioritised as well as the well-being of the mother and child from an all-round perspective–emotional, social, holistic well-being.

It differs a lot from the erstwhile *dai* system because the midwifery model of care is part of modern medicine in a way the *dai* system was not. It is very science-oriented and based on allopathic mainstream medicine. Midwives are extremely popular in developed countries–Canada, Australia, the U.S. and so forth–and they are well-trained. Even in India, a professional midwife has 5.5 to 6.5 years of training in the allopathic system.

In 2018, the Government of India established a new staffing cadre of 'Nurse Practitioners in Midwifery' (NPM), while in 2022, the foundation signed an MoU with the Department of Health & Family Welfare, Government of Karnataka, to launch the Nurse Practitioners in Midwifery programme in the state. How different is the NPM programme from the general nursing and midwifery programmes (GNM) in nursing schools?

There is a massive amount of confusion between *dais*, professional midwives and nurse midwives. Sure, there have been many cadres of nurse midwives, general nurse midwives and so forth, who have been given the responsibility of delivering babies, but typically they have been trained as obstetric nurses. There hasn't been any large-scale effort to train them in the midwifery model, which centres on maternal care, [follows] best practices and [has] a belief in a logical process, till 2018.

The Nurse Practitioner in Midwifery (NPM) programme is a cascade training model, where International Midwifery Educators train the Nurse Practitioners in Midwifery Educators (NPME) at the National Midwifery Training Institutes. The educator programme is 18 months long, with six months of intensive training, and 12 months of mentorship. The NPMEs in turn train the Nurse Practitioners in Midwifery or the practicing midwives at State Midwifery Training Institutes. The training programme for midwives is also 18 months long, with 12 months of intensive training and six months of mentorship.

This is very different from the general nursing and midwifery programmes as much more emphasis is placed on midwifery and is like a specialisation, post the general nursing programme. The NPM programme trains midwives in the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) competencies, which are of international standards.

The requirements for an NPME and NPM are very different from a GNM. For an NPME, one requires a BSc in Nursing plus five years of experience in maternity care or an MSc in Nursing plus two years of experience in maternity care. For an NPM, one requires a bare minimum of a GNM degree, post which one can apply for the NPM training.

On the other hand, GNM can be done post-12th standard. The GNM and NPMs also differ in their place of practice. GNMs can work across healthcare verticals in healthcare facilities. On the other hand, NPMs will specialise in low-risk pregnancies and births, and practice at Midwifery-Led Care Units (MLCUs).

I know that your own birthing experience led to the formation of the foundation. Can you tell us more about it?

At the time I was pregnant, I was a PhD student at Harvard [University] and spent a chunk of my first and third trimester in Cambridge, Massachusetts and the rest in India. Since I was travelling back and forth, I was struck by the difference in the quality of healthcare between the U.S. and India. It is not that the U.S. is a global leader, but the difference between Cambridge and Bangalore was shocking. We were easily 30-40 years behind the U.S. in most aspects.

One was the ridiculous sky-high rate of C-sections. If you look at modern data, Karnataka's average rate of C-section is 52%, and this was five years ago. God knows what it is now. There are many districts that have C-section rates of 70-80 % in Karnataka.

This is much higher than the norm of 10-20%, modern evidence-based numbers, that are appropriate for the well-being of the mother and child. We don't randomly do knee surgeries and heart surgeries for joy. There is no reason to do this invasive surgery on women for no good reason. I even remember speaking to a nurse agency to hire someone for the 40 days after childbirth, and they asked me if I was going for a normal or caesarean as if it were a choice.

Another thing was the routine episiotomy. I could not find a single doctor who agreed to deliver my baby without an episiotomy, even though there is abundant research that says that it causes more harm than good: severe tearing, more morbidity for mothers and so forth. Even things like routine shaving, routine enema, and not allowing partners all the time in the room bothered me.

I looked at hospitals all over the country – Delhi, Bombay, Bangalore – and finally went to a U.S.-trained midwife in Hyderabad where I had a very good birth experience.

All this was in 2016. I was still a student at that time and went back to my PhD after this but, by 2017, realised that I wanted to move towards maternal health.

I finished my PhD in 2018, after which I started working on Aastrika. We finally launched in May 2019.

Can you go into some of the maternal health challenges you sought to address through this venture?

Of course, we wanted to work on reducing infant and maternal mortality but we also wanted to arrest the massive growth in over-intervention. Just from the years we started the foundation, C-section rates have continued to climb ridiculously. We are regularly seeing 70-80-90 % in districts in India, which is insane. You are affecting the entire fertility future of this family for minimal cause.

Another issue is the strong usage of medications without it being needed. This is not just true of urban India but across the country. There are primary healthcare centres where it is standard to inject people with oxytocin to speed up labour even though it causes foetal distress.

Finally, we do a lot of work in trying to stamp out abuse which is very rampant in childbirth across the country. Verbal abuse, complete lack of privacy and slapping happens frequently.

In elite hospitals, you will not have physical or verbal abuse but if they are doing surgery on you for their convenience and not yours, it is a kind of physical abuse. It is your organs that will have consequences, not theirs. If not done for reasons of healthcare benefits, it is abuse.

GalaxEye signs MoU with IN-SPACe

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

GalaxEye, a space-tech start-up and the first Indian company to have a focus on earth observation satellites has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe), an autonomous agency under the Department of Space of the Government of India.

This collaboration is formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in Ahmedabad.

GalaxEye became the first beneficiary of IN-SPACe's co-working as well as testing space based in Ahmedabad through the partnership.

The partnership further facilitates the utilization of ISRO's top-of-the-range laboratories and testing facilities.

Suyash Singh, Co-founder and CEO of GalaxEye, said, "By collaborating with IN-SPACe and leveraging their state-of-the-art facilities, we are poised to revolutionize the way we gather and analyze data from Earth's orbit."

Stories of men by men - six monologues to take over the stage

'Men's Monologue' is about a small percentage of men who break myths of what people generally think of men

Yemen S.
BENGALURU

Prithesh Bhandary

Sufaid Sulaiman

Men's Monologue performance is a presentation of anecdotes of six male artists from Bengaluru and across the country, inspired by its Chennai showcase started by B. Charles, a renowned theatremaker and founder of Medai. The Chennai-based performance space, Medai, expanded its wings in Bengaluru last year with a black box, that has now become a stage for budding artists, seasoned theatre practitioners and art enthusiasts.

Breaking myths

Curated by Preeti Banerjee, Programming Director, Medai Bengaluru and performed by Gaurav Singh, Prithesh Bhandary, Satyam Gangwar, Rohit Prasannan, Darshan Jain and Sufaid Sulaiman, *Men's Monologue* is about a small percentage of men who break myths of what people generally think of men. The motto of the show is to make sure every story should be heard regardless of gender, race and community.

"There is no denying that we are still living in a highly patriarchal society where rules and norms formed and upheld by men ruin the life of women, children and sometimes their own life too. But as there are two sides to a coin, we are going to explore the other side; a small percentage of men and break myths of what people generally think of men through this show", says Preeti.

Young and single

Speaking to *The Hindu*, actor and theatre maker, Prithesh Bhandary says his piece titled *Young and Single* is a lighthearted take on a man's life in his mid 30s and the expectations around him, "My performance is about a man in his mid 30s. It talks about how in general marriage is made the most important decision of his life, and how people look at you and treat you. It is a funny take on how people judge or decide things for you when you are 35-36 years old and still single."

"This piece is important to me as I am of the same age, and there is a constant question of marriage around me. I also talk about how you become calmer and more composed at this age and the way you date and look at people changes in your mid 30s", Prithesh adds.

Midlife Crisis

Actor and theatre maker, Sufaid Sulaiman, who will also be presenting a monologue titled *Midlife Crisis or Existential Crisis?*, says "My piece is about a man who is trying to figure out what is going on in his life. He is searching for the right words to explain the helplessness that has plagued his existence. He also expresses his desire to have company, to dance with him to the wonders of the universe and to share his sorrows when he sees unsettling things in this world. The piece is about a man who believes that love and empathy are the healthiest escapes from this existence. He's trying out all the equations and theories to create a new definition, a new language to find peace and equality in this world. The piece talks about the man's understanding of the importance of this journey".

Medai - The Space, will be presenting *Men's Monologue* on May 12, at 4.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. at its venue in Koramangala, 5th Block.

Tickets for *Men's Monologue* is available on *BookMyShow* and at the venue, priced at ₹300.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 10, 1974

Mangalore-Puttur Diesel Train Proposed

Mangalore, May 9: The Southern Railway proposes to run diesel car passenger trains with a capacity of 100 to 120 seats between Mangalore and Puttur on the plain portion of the Mangalore-Hassan section when the bridge across the Netravati river is completed.

Mr. H. F. Pinto, Railway Board Member (Transportation), who met the member of the Kanara Chamber of Commerce and Industry here on April 26 said the question of running diesel car trains between Mangalore and Kasaragod would also be examined to provide amenities for short-distance passengers.

Ban on Fodder Export Defended

Bangalore, May 9: Mr. N. Chikke Gowda, Agriculture Minister, defended in the Legislative Assembly to-day the ban on export of fodder, on the ground that the export would hit the health of the livestock in the State.

Replying to a calling-attention notice tabled by Mr. B. B. Sayanak (MES) Mr. Chikke Gowda said that the Government had issued the Mysore Cattle Fodder (Regulation of Export) Order, 1972 restricting the export of wheat bran, ragi hay, paddy straw etc. except under a permit issued by the Government. There was a steep rise in the prices of livestock feed and it was beyond the means of farmers to buy concentrates.

Earlier, Mr. Sayanak said that agriculturists were incurring losses on account of the ban on the export of the fodder.

Karnataka InFocus

THE HINDU

NUGGETS OF HISTORY

A grain consumed by millions

Rice in its domesticated form is the staple food for over half of the world's human population, particularly in Asia and Africa. Historins believe that Asian rice was domesticated in China some 13,500 to 8,200 years ago, while African rice was domesticated in Africa some 3,000 years ago. China and India are among the largest consumers of rice.

The interest began with a gift

The quest for rice collection by Syed Ghani Khan began in the year 2000 and he had about 40 varieties and strains of paddy. This has grown to 1350 so far by 2024 and the number is growing with each passing year. It all began with a relative gifting him a sack of nearly 40 strains of paddy and Ghani Khan realised that he knew nothing of their nature or origin.

How his rice collection got a fillip

Though Ghani Khan used to informally collect varieties of rice, his quest for the exotic paddy seeds received a fillip when he joined the Save Our Rice campaign in 2004. The involvement in the Save Our Rice campaign brought Ghani Khan in contact with other rice saviours from across the country like Debal Deb with whom he exchanged different varieties of rice.

Honours received by Ghani Khan

The conservation of different varieties of paddy and rice by Ghani Khan drew the attention of the Government of India when he received the Plant Genome Saviour Farmer Award instituted by the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India in 2012. He has been the recipent of several other awards.

A rich heritage in mangoes too

The nearly 15 acres of land at Kirugavalu in Malavalli taluk of Mandya district, inherited by Syed Ghani Khan, belonged to his forefathers some of whom were in service with the 18th century ruler Tipu Sultan. The land has 120 varieties of mangoes in the orchard called Badaa Baagh and the exotic varieties are not found anywhere else.

This conservator of agricultural diversity has saved many rice varieties

Syed Ghani Khan has a treasure trove of 1,350 varieties and strains of paddy in his collection which he has exhibited in his private museum at Kirugavalu in Mandya district

R. Krishna Kumar
MYSURU

A childhood passion for heritage conservation and an unfulfilled desire of chalking out a career as a museologist culminated in this farmer conceiving his own museum -- of rice varieties -- which is one of its kind in Karnataka.

As a student, Syed Ghani Khan of Kirugavalu in Malavalli taluk of Mandya district nurtured a desire of entering the field of archaeology and museums and pursued his studies to in the hope of becoming the curator of a museum.

But fate willed otherwise and family commitments made him switch to agriculture in 1996 and tend to his plot of nearly 15 acres in Kirugavalu.

Agro diversity of India

But the zest for conservation and the curiosity in him led Ghani Khan to explore the world of plants and understand the agro-diversity of India. And to his dismay he discovered that the famed agro-diversity of the country was fast being supplanted by the growing preference for monoculture and the hybrid varieties of crops developed in laboratories.

The preference for hybrid varieties with thrust on higher yield has invariably led to the emergence of monoculture and is also a contributory factor for hundreds of indigenous varieties of rice being pushed to the brink and is no longer cultivated. ''It is this realisation that made me collect indigenous or rare varieties of rice from across Karnataka and the country and preserve their seeds and the exercise commenced sometime in 2000-01,'' recalled Ghani Khan.

An unusual gift

This was preceded by his relative gifting him a sack of nearly 40 strains of paddy and Ghani Khan realised that he knew nothing of their nature or origin and nor were the agricultural scientists aware of some of them. Also, sometime after taking to farming of his ancestral property, Ghani Khan's health suffered a setback and this was attributed to the chemicals and pesticides with which he used to come in contact during agricultural activity.

''It was then that I decided to eschew the so-called modern agriculture with its thrust on the use of chemicals and opted for organic farming sometime during the year 2000,'' recalled Ghani Khan.

Joining Kerala initative

It was an informal effort on the part of Ghani Khan to preserve rice varieties but his endeavour received a fillip when he got involved in the 'Save Our Rice' campaign which began in 2004 at Kumbalangi in Kerala, said Krishnaprasad, founder of Sahaja Samruddha, an organisation actively involved in preservation of indigenous varieties of rice and is also promoting millet cultivation.

The involvement in the Save Our Rice campaign brought Ghani Khan in contact with other rice saviours from across the country like Debal Deb with whom he exchanged different varieties of rice and thus increased his collection, he added. What began as a small initiative grew organically and as on date Ghani Khan has a treasure trove of 1350 varieties and strains of paddy in his collection which he has exhibited in his private museum at Kirugavalu. And the collection tends to grow with each passing year or tour of Ghani Khan in quest of the obscure rice varieties that takes him across the country.

Exotic varieties, exotic names

The paddy museum occupies a part of his house on the farm itself and visitors get introduced to exotic strains of paddy with their equally exotic sounding names like Gandhasale, Rajamudi, Mysuru Mallige, Ratnachoodi, Chinna Ponni, Salem Sanna, Jeerge Sanna, Bilinellu, Burma Black, Black Jasmine from Thailand, Raskadam, Rakthashali to name a few.

Syed Ghani Khan displaying a paddy variety at his farm in Kirugavalu in Malavalli taluk of Mandya district. M.A SRIRAM

Decorative items made of paddy which provide value addition displayed by Syed Ghani Khan.

Decorative items made of paddy and rice.

''Our of nearly 15 acres of land, 1 acre of the plot is for rice conservation and seed production while the remaining land is used for cultivating other agricultural produce - through organic means - for self-sustenance and income generation,'' says Ghani Khan.

His demonstration plot also has shades of different hues depending on the paddy strain cultivated for seed production like the purple coloured Nazar Battha from Maharasthra or the black coloured Kaala Nouni from Assam.

While the cultivation of different varieties and strains of paddy does not add to the family income, it has brought a sense of satisfaction to Ghani Khan that he has preserved a slice of agricultural heritage to posterity.

''So far over 15,000 farmers have procured seeds of different strains of paddy from me and to that extent they have been retrieved from the brink of extinction,'' says Ghani Khan. While some of the paddy strains are commercially cultivable on a large scale many are heirloom varieties, he added.

Stream of visitors

His Paddy Museum attracts visitors from across the country including agricultural students, farmers, scientists, NGOs working in the field of agriculture, conservationists as also research scholars.

Syed Ghani Khan displayig a few strains of paddy from his collection. M.A. SRIRAM

''We conduct classes depending on their requirement highlighting the benefits of different strains, speak about their origin etc and this comes in handy for students of agriculture as well while lot of farmers visit the farm and seek information on value addition to shore up income,'' said Ghani Khan indicating that the museum is a hub of knowledge sharing and information exchange for farmers.

Though not a believer of hybridization, Ghani Khan did cross pollinate two varieties of paddy - Salem Sanna and HMT - and christened it SH but did not pursue the exercise further. ''What have evolved naturally suitable to the local environment are drought and pest resistant. But the hybrid varieties only add to the cost of cultivation,'' says Ghani Khan underlining his scepticism of the current emphasis on hybrid varieties.

Issue of input costs

The hybrid varieties are encouraged and is the norm in the present times in pursuit of higher yield. But the agricultural input cost by way of pesticides, insecticides, fertilizers etc have increased thus reducing farmers income, explained Krishnaprasad.

In the farming world and among those involved in agricultural activism, the work of Syed Ghani Khan is well known. And in recognition of his efforts, he received the Krishi Pandit award from the Karnataka Government in 2008, Krishi Jeeva Vaividya award in 2010 and in 2012 he was awarded the prestigious Plant Genome Saviour Farmer Award instituted by the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India.

Rare varieties of mangoes are cultivated on the farm of Syed Ghani Khan.

Solar-powered mill

Apart from paddy conservation, Ghani Khan recently established a solar powered rice mill which meets the requirements of farmers with small land holdings. Though a solar powered rice mill is not the first of its kind in the region as there are other examples, Ghani Khan's mill is an example of a community-level initiative that can cater to the requirements of farmers with small-scale production unlike the giant commercial mills, explained Krishnaprasad.

While Ghani Khan's fame in the farming world rests on his collection of different strains of paddy, he is also the inheritor of another slice of heritage from his forefathers some of whom were employed by the 18th century ruler Tipu Sultan.

A rich heritage in mangoes

''There are 120 varieties of mangoes in his orchard called Badaa Baagh and the exotic varieties are not found anywhere else. This includes Mosambikaam which has the taste of a sweet lime while the Sebaam is akin to an apple in terms of colour and taste. But this year there has been no yield so far due to drought,'' said Ghani Khan. Incidentally, the National Innovation FoundationA -India facilitated the on-site evaluation of the variety by the scientists of ICAR-Indian Institute of Horticulture Research, Bengaluru.

While value addition to paddy hinges on food products made of rice to increase profitability of rice cultivation and production, Ghani Khan, supported by his family members, have begun to use paddy husk and rice to make decorative items including Torana, jewellery etc which has the potential to increase farmers' income.

For someone who wished to be a curator of a museum preserving archaeological and cultural artifacts when he was a student, Ghani Khan's journey as a farmer took a different trajectory altogether. He is now the custodian and preserver of a slice of agricultural heritage that was on the brink of extinction and he has enabled their conservation.

Blast at a fireworks manufacturing unit in Sivakasi kills 10 persons, 13 sustain injuries

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin promises to provide government relief assistance to all the affected persons

The Hindu Bureau
SIVAKASI

Nine workers, including six women, were killed in an explosion at Sudarshan fireworks unit in Sivakasi on Thursday afternoon. Police said 13 persons sustained injuries, including burns, in the accident.

The workers were involved in different processes of manufacturing of fireworks at the unit in Sengamalapatti under Sivakasi East police station when the blast rocked the fireworks unit.

Swift action: Firefighters putting out the flames after the explosion at a fireworks unit in Sivakasi on Thursday. PTI

The deceased were identified as Vijayakumar (28), C. Ramesh (32), G. Kaleeswaran (47), M. Muthu, M. Avudaiyammal, V. Lakshmi (47), S. Vasanthi (48), S. Veeralakshmi (48), K. Petchiammal alias Jeyalakshmi (25).

Seven working sheds were razed down to the ground and another six were partially damaged in the impact of the explosion at around 2.15 p.m.

Though fire tenders from Sivakasi rushed to the spot, the continuous bursting of fireworks goods inside the unit licensed by Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation.

Three fire tenders from Sivakasi and Virudhunagar fought for more than half an hour to put out the fire.

"We suspect that deployment of untrained workers in sensitive process of chemicals could have led to the accident," said Virudhunagar Superintendent of Police, K. Feroze Khan Abdullah.

"With the complaint of one worker missing, search for the person amidst the debris is underway," the SP said.

The sudden change in climatic conditions is also said to be the cause of the accident. A police source said that more than 100 workers were working at the time of accident.

While one S. Saravanan of Sivakasi is the license holder for the fireworks unit, one Muthukrishnan is suspected to have taken the unit on lease for manufacturing the fireworks goods, according to police source.

Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin, has condoled the death of workers in the fireworks accident.

In a statement, he said that he has directed the district Collector to take up expeditious rescue operation and to provide life-saving treatment to all the injured.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday

TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy rainfall likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya and Odisha. Thunderstorm with lightning/gusty winds likely at isolated places over Punjab, Nagaland, Manipur, Telangana, central Maharashtra, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Kerala and south interior Karnataka

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	33.8	23.2	Kozhikode	46	36.0	25.3
Ahmedabad	—	43.0	28.9	Kurnool	—	39.0	26.2
Aizawl	—	33.3	19.0	Lucknow	—	37.4	24.7
Allahabad	—	39.4	26.0	Madurai	0.5	39.4	27.1
Bengaluru	18	33.6	20.2	Mangaluru	—	34.9	26.4
Bhopal	—	41.9	26.9	Mumbai	—	33.7	26.8
Bhubaneswar	—	35.9	23.3	Mysuru	—	38.8	—
Chandigarh	—	36.3	28.3	New Delhi	—	38.8	26.0
Chennai	—	36.6	28.5	Patna	—	28.4	25.4
Coimbatore	—	38.4	26.2	Port Blair	—	34.1	27.2
Dehradun	—	33.5	22.6	Puducherry	0.3	36.1	27.7
Gangtok	—	18.6	14.1	Pune	—	40.7	25.9
Goa	—	34.5	25.5	Raipur	—	36.7	26.9
Guwahati	—	32.0	22.7	Ranchi	—	34.4	22.0
Hubballi	—	39.0	24.0	Shillong	3	20.7	13.1
Hyderabad	—	37.0	26.6	Shimla	—	26.5	17.8
Imphal	—	31.3	18.7	Srinagar	—	30.8	12.4
Jaipur	—	42.6	28.6	Thiruvananthapuram	10	35.5	24.9
Kochi	7	33.8	23.6	Tiruchi	—	39.3	29.0
Kohima	2	20.0	13.0	Vijayawada	—	36.3	27.6
Kolkata	—	33.4	25.6	Visakhapatnam	1	33.7	28.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	4	33	.85	106	125	
Bengaluru	7	11	.57	89	83	
Chennai	3	7	.72	39	39	
Delhi	.18	.71	.67	233	207	
Hyderabad	2	.31	.42	40	85	
Kolkata	8	.33	.23	29	39	
Lucknow	6	.53	.21	228	129	
Mumbai	—	.31	.23	195	93	
Pune	112	168	113	95	72	
Visakhapatnam	.13	.32	.15	36	71	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 315 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Madikeri, Karnataka recorded a healthy AQI score of 26

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Kharge, Yechury, Raja to address INDIA bloc rally in Vijayawada today

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The All India Congress Committee's Andhra Pradesh in-charge, Manickam Tagore, on Thursday said the party's national president, Mallikarjun Kharge, and INDIA bloc leaders from the CPI(M) and CPI, Sitaram Yechury and D. Raja, respectively, will address a public meeting at Gymkhana grounds in Vijayawada on Friday at 5 p.m.

Addressing a press conference at Andhra Ratna Bhavan, Mr. Tagore said former AICC president Rahul Gandhi would campaign in support of the APCC president and party's candidate for Kadapa Lok Sabha constituency, Y. S. Sharmila, and address a public meeting at Kadapa.

Mr. Tagore said it was ridiculous on the part of the BJP at the Centre, which had turned blind to the corruption and anarchy unleashed by the YSRCP government in the State in the last five years, to raise the issue of corruption in the State today. He said the ruling party leaders associated with land and sand mafia ruled the roost, but the BJP remained a mute spectator.

"Now, suddenly, Prime Minister Narendra Modi raises a hue and cry over it as if it has been discovered overnight," he said.

Manickam Tagore

Rahul Gandhi to campaign for APCC chief and Kadapa LS candidate Y.S. Sharmila tomorrow; Manickam Tagore says Modi had turned a blind eye to corruption, anarchy of YSRCP govt.

He said that Ms. Sharmila was fighting the battle in Kadapa to ensure justice to the family members of slain former MP Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy.

AICC election observer Manoj Chauhan, APCC vice-presidents V. Gurunadam and Kolanukonda Shivaji, APCC administration and organising general secretary S.N. Raja, Vijayawada city president Naraharisetty Narasimha Rao and others were present.

Karnataka BJP social media cell convener questioned

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Continuing investigations into the social media post targeting Muslims, the High Grounds police summoned and questioned State BJP media cell convener on Thursday.

The police questioned Prashanth Maknur about the source and the people behind the post. The police recorded his statement before he was released.

The police had earlier summoned BJP national president J.P. Nadda, IT cell head Amit Malviya, and State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra informing them to appear before the Investigating officer within a week's time. The trio has been charged with a social media post that depicted the Congress appeasing Muslims at the cost of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes. Based on the complaint filed by a Congress worker, Ramesh Babu, the police have registered an FIR against the trio charging them under promoting or attempting to promote on grounds of religion, race, caste, community or language, feeling of enmity or hatred, between different classes and also under Representation of People Act and 505 (2) (creating or promoting enmity, hatred or ill will between classes) of IPC.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY G20

Tender Notice No. 12/2024 Dated: 03-04-2024

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders through IREPS only for supply of following items: **Tender Closing Time : 10:30 Hrs.**

Tender No	Description in Brief
L8236975A	Design, Supply, Installation, commissioning and prove out of the machine, Electric Overhead Traveling Crane shall be Double giridar as per parameters. **Qty-01 Set.**

Last Date of Submission/Tender Due on : 27-05-2024

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

PUB/57/AAD/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Senior Divisional Materials Manager, Bengaluru**

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY G20

E- TENDER NOTICE No. 08/MYS/2024 of 03-05-2024

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

Sl.	Description of work	Approx Value
1	Protection works for vulnerable cutting at Km. 0/800-1/000 on both sides between Mysuru-Ashokapuram Stations, Km.13/000-300 on both side between Belagula -Satna Station and Km. 33/900 - 34/200 at Krishnarajanagar yard with Gabion walls and Galvanised Steel Wire rope net along with chain-link mesh-netting under Assistant Divisional Engineer/I/Mysuru Sub-Division.	**Rs. 1,85,23,275/-**
2	**Sub Work - I** :Assistant Divisional Engineer/Sakleshpur Sub Division:- Construction of Boundary Wall along the track approaches of Bantawala & Mangaluru Jn Stations for a length of 2500mtrs. **Sub Work - II** : Assistant Divisional Engineer/Mysuru Sub Division :- Construction of Boundary Wall along the track approaches of Ashokapuram & Nanjangud Town Stations for a length of 2200mtrs.	**Rs. 3,95,61,241/-**
3	**Mysuru Division**-Assistant Divisional Engineer/Sakleshpur Sub Division-Supply of different size of MS Bolts & Nuts, Hook Bolts & Nuts and 10mm thick Rubber pads to ensure zero missing fittings over girder bridges in Sakleshpur-Subrahmanya Road Section.	**Rs. 39,41,474/-**
4	**Sub Work - I** :Mysuru-Hole Narsipur Section : Strengthening of Bridges from Km.40.000 to Km.86.400 by providing pitching, flooring, Drop wall, steps, ,Ballast retainer etc (Total 80 No. of Bridges). **Sub Work - II**:- Mysuru-Yediyur Section: Ancilliary works to wing wall, retaining wall, side drain and approach road at LHRUB No.741 B at Km. 131/300-4000 between Mysuru-Naganahalli Stations in Assistant Divisional Engineer/Mysuru Sub-Division. **Sub Work - III**:- Mysuru-Chamarajanagar Section: Ancilliary works to wing wall, retaining wall, side drain and approach road at LHRUB No.841 A at Km. 58/400-500 between Nanjangud Town-Chamarajanagar Stations in Assistant Divisional Engineer/Mysuru Sub-Division.	**Rs. 2,70,89,762/-**
5	**Sub Work - I** : **Mysuru :-** Maintenance of Garden, Trees, Hedges, etc at Division Office Building, Station Building Circulating Area, VRC Officers Colony, Officers Rest House & Gandhi Vana for the period of 24 Month **Sub Work - II** : **Mysuru :-** Operation and daily maintenance including supply of consumable for water recycling plant from inlet to outlet of GLR in good condition for a period of two years.	**Rs. 1,05,22,688/-**
6	**Sub Work - I** : **Mysuru :-** Construction of sewage treatment plant (2) at Mysuru as per NGT guidelines **Sub Work - II** : **Mysuru :-** Construction of RCC box drain cum compound wall along railway boundary parallel to stabling line Upto STP to treat sewage water as per NGT guidelines	**Rs.4,93,09,106/-**
7	**Mysuru Division**:- Assistant Divisional Engineer/Mysuru Sub Division:- Construction of Boundary Wall/Compound wall along the track approaches of Hole Narsipur & Hassan stations for a length of 2800mtrs.	**Rs. 2,40,29,981/-**
8	**Sampige Road-Arsikere Section:** Improvements to Cess at Locations Km.110/550-110/610 (LH), 111/000-111/140 (LH), 111/500-111/700 (LH), 111/750-111/880 (LH), 111/950-112/310 (LH), 115/000-115/500 (LH), 116/210-116/900 (LH), 116/990-117/550 (LH), 117/700-118/300 (LH), 119/600-120/200 (LH), 120/600-120/900 (LH), 121/500-122/200 (LH), 122/700-123/100 (LH), 123/500-124/200 (LH), 125/200-125/900 (LH), 127/000-127/500 (LH), 128/000-128/900 (LH), 130/500-130/830 (LH), 130/870-131/500 (LH), 131/700-132/300 (LH), 133/200-134/000 (LH), 135/700-135/960 (LH), 136/000-136/500 (LH), 137/400-137/650 (LH), 137/700-138/000 (LH), 138/400-139/200 (LH), 144/600-144/700 (LH), 145/000-145/600 (LH), 145/600-145/700 (LH), 145/700-145/880 (LH), 145/900-146/000 (LH), 146/000-146/500 (LH), 146/750-146/900 (LH), 147/800-147/900 (LH), 149/200-149/400 (LH).	**Rs. 2,44,09,065/-**
9	**Birur -Shivamogga Town:** Improvements to Cess at Locations Km. 1/180-1/600 (LH), 2/200-2/700 (LH), 4/200-4/500 (LH&RH), 8/400-8/900 (LH&RH), 14/120-15/100 (LH&RH), 25/30-26/000 (LH&RH), 28/650-29/450 (LH&RH), 37/900@ 45&47@ 500 (LH&RH), 45/500-45/650 (LH&RH), 46/300-46/400 (LH&RH), 46/500-46/700 (LH&RH), 47/900-48/000 (RH), 49/200-49/300 (LH&RH), 49/700-49/850 (LH&RH), 51/200-51/700 (RH), 52/700-52/950 (LH&RH), 56/600-56/700 (LH&RH), 59/150-59/350 (LH), 60/900-61/100 (RH), 61/500-61/800 (LH), 61/950@ 45>47@ 050 (LH&RH)	**Rs. 73,94,854/-**
10	**Sub Work-I**: Kadur-Chikkamagalur Section: Protection works for vulnerable cutting from Km 37/000 to Km 38/250 between Sakharayapatna-Chikkamagalur Stations. **Sub Work-II**:Kadur-Chikkamagalur Section: Slope Protection works for vulnerable cutting at Km 32/500-32/900 between Kanivehalli-Chikkamagalur Stations.	**Rs. 4,83,57,242/-**
11	**Hole Narsipur-Arsikere Section:-** Proposed construction of foot over bridge (3m wide) of clear span 1 x 11.33m with staircase facility at km: 104/100 between Mavinkere-Hassan Stations to eliminate unauthorized crossing.	**Rs. 1,44,95,908/-**

Last date for submission of bids:**Upto 11:00 Hrs. on 27-05-2024**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

PUB/58/AAD/PRB/SWR/2024-25 **Senior Divisional Engineer /Co-Ordination/Mysuru**

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
NOTIFICATION No.247/2024-RC

1. The Notification is issued for **Seven (07)** posts in the cadre of District Judge (Entry Level) under Direct Recruitment.
2. This Notification is issued in terms of the orders of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Civil Appeal No.1867 of 2006, dated 04.01.2007.
3. Applications are invited for recruitment to **Seven (07)** posts of District Judge (Entry Level) under 25% quota under Direct Recruitment in the A.P. State Judicial (Service and Cadre) Rules, 2007.

Category & Number of Posts:
OC - 03, Economically Weaker Section (EWS) - 01(W), BC-C - 01, BC-D - 01, ST - 01(W), **TOTAL - 07 (2W).**

4. Further the details viz., detailed Notification and Proforma Application and Hall Tickets in Original and duplicates are available in the official website of High Court of Andhra Pradesh and can be accessed at **"https://aphc.gov.in"** from **10.05.2024** onwards.
5. Filled-in applications in prescribed proforma together with enclosures of the candidates should be submitted in the office of **the Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Secretariat Buildings, Velagapudi, Guntur District, on or before 27.05.2024 at 5.00 P.M.**

Dated: 10.05.2024 **Dr. K.S. JAWAHAR REDDY,**
DIPR 13507/CL, Dt: 09-05-2024 **CHIEF SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT**

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that our Client has negotiated to purchase the **Schedule Property** from its present owners **Mrs. R. GIRIJAMBA, Mr. R. SHIVASHANKAR and Mr. R. SRINIVASA MURHTY,** children of Late Y.R.Ramanath Iyer who have obtained succession Certificate P&S.C No. 494/2021, being the legal heirs of the original owner Late R.L KANTHU .

Any Person/s having or claiming any manner of right, title, claim lien or interest in the **Schedule Property** may intimate the same in writing to the undersigned along with documentary evidence in support of their claim **within 10 days** from the date of this publication, failing which, our client will be advised to proceed with the conveyance as if no valid claims are subsisting against the Schedule Property.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

Immovable Property bearing BDA Site No.571, BBMP Khata No.2818/571, situated at Sector 2. **HSR Layout,** Bangalore South Taluk, measuring East to West 12.19 Meters or 40 Feet and North to South 9.14 Meters or 30 Feet , totally measuring 111.42 Square Meters or 1200 Square Feet and bounded on the :

East by : 40 Feet Road
West by : Property bearing Site No.590
North by : Property bearing Site No.570 and
South by : Property bearing Site No.572.

(S.A.H. RAZVI & ARIF PASHA)
No.60, 2 nd floor, M.M. Complex, Chick Bazaar Road, Tasker Town, Bangalore-560 051 Mob: **9845049766/ 9243132714**

Bangalore Dated:10.05.2024

Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Hassan District, Hassan

No: C.A.L(bara)/2023-24 Dated: 09.05.2024

: Tender Publication Call-2:

It is intended to start cattle camps/ fodder banks in all 8 Taluks of Hassan District if the scarcity of fodder arises. Interested and qualified tenderers are invited to participate in this tender to supply dry fodder of Paddy and Raagi to cattle camps/ fodder banks. Sl.No. 1)Item details Dry fodder of Paddy and Raagi Estimated cost in Rupees 1,33,00,000/- EMD amount 2,00,000.00 Tender Period: 90 days from the date of start of cattle camps/ fodder banks or till the further orders of the government whichever is earlier 2)Fodder transportation cost per tonne per km Rs 17.50 Interested and qualified tenderes/bidders can participate in the online tender by depositing tender non repayable tender fee, download the tender documents from the E-procurement portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ Indent No. DMA/2023-24/IND1815/CALL-2 of tenderer login.

Sd/- S.Dharmapal KAS (Sr.Gr) Project Director, DUDC, Hassan.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಟೆಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/13/ಕೆಎಸ್ ಎಂಸಿಎ/2024–25

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Extension of Time

Ref. IFP No.: WBSEDCL/TURGA PSP/HM/PQ-ICB/10/23-24, **Dtd.:** 07.03.2024 of the Chief Engineer, Pumped Storage Project Department, WBSEDCL. **PQ Application Submission End Date** is hereby extended up to **10.06.2024 (14:00 hrs. IST).**

For details, visit **https://wbtenders.gov.in** & **www.wbsedcl.in**

KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice

Tender No : KWA/SP-02/2024-25/TRA-3, KWA/SP-03/2024-25/Flow, KWA/SP-04/2024-25/WM, Empanelment of Manufacturers of Transformers, flow Meters, Water Meters, **EMD :** Rs. 5000 each, **Tender fee :** Rs. 2500 each, **Last Date for submitting Tender :** 18-05-2024 03:00:pm, **Phone :** 8281597973
Website : **www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in**
Chief Engineer (HRD&GI.)
KWA-JB-GL-6-3-2024-25 Jalabhavan, Thiruvananthapuram

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NSIL एनसिल

RFQ No: NSIL/RFQ/LVM3/PPP/01 **Date: 10/05/2024**

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION (RFQ) ADVERTISEMENT

ISRO's Heavy Lift Launcher - LVM3 Production under Public Private Partnership (PPP) with NSIL

NewSpace India Limited ("NSIL"), a CPSE (Government of India Undertaking) under Department of Space ("DoS"), is the commercial arm of the Indian Space Research Organization ("ISRO"). NSIL has the mandate of enabling Indian industries to scale up high-technology manufacturing and production base for meeting the Global space programme needs.

In line with the opening up of Indian space sector, as part of space sector reforms announced by Government of India, during June 2020, NSIL is considering collaborating with Indian industry partner to leverage their expertise and capabilities for manufacturing ISRO's heavy lift launcher, LVM3, under a Public Private Partnership (PPP) framework. This initiative of NSIL is towards meeting the Global Launch Service needs and enhancing India's market share in Global Space Economy. Towards this, NSIL is inviting Indian industry partners to participate in this RFQ process for productionizing 6 Nos of LVM3 vehicles annually over a period of 10 plus years.

RFQ Information:

1.	**Mode of Tender**	Open Tender
2.	**Basic Eligibility**	The Bidder shall be an India Firm registered under the Company's Act and operational for a period of more than Five Years.
3.	**Consortium**	Allowed
4.	**RFQ Issue Date**	**10th May 2024**
5.	**Last Date for Submission of Bid Response**	**21st June 2024**, up to **1800 Hours** (IST)
6.	**RFQ document cost**	₹**75,000 + 18% GST** (Non-Refundable)
7.	**Address for Correspondence for Bid Submission**	Deputy Manager (Commercial), NewSpace India Limited (NSIL),11th Floor, Brigade Rubix, 20, Watch Factory Rd, Phase -1, Yeswanthpur, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560013
8.	**Contact Information**	Email ID: **purchase@nsilindia.co.in** Contact: **080 23227777**
9.	**Website for RFQ Download**	**https://www.nsilindia.co.in/**

Transaction Advisors – IIFCL Projects Ltd.

Turmoil and test

Haryana Governor must ask the government to prove its majority

Haryana is in political turmoil after three independent MLAs withdrew their support to the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and its former coalition partner, the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP), offered support to the Congress to form an alternative government. In the 90-member State Assembly, which currently has an effective strength of 88, the BJP government led by Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini appears to be in a minority with 43 MLAs by its side – it needs 45 for a majority. But BJP leaders assert that their government is under 'no threat' and if there be any need, 'other MLAs' will support them – an indicator of support from disgruntled MLAs of the JJP. The Congress and the JJP have come out all guns blazing at the BJP, but appear to be moving with a guarded approach by putting the onus to initiate the process of bringing down the incumbent government on each other. Both parties have asked Governor Bandaru Dattatreya to intervene. While the Congress has demanded immediate Assembly polls under President's rule, the JJP has asked the Governor to seek an immediate 'floor test' to determine the majority of the incumbent government in the Legislative Assembly.

The Congress and the JJP are trying to consolidate their base in the midst of the general election and in the run-up to the Assembly election, which is due to be held in normal course in October. At least two of the 10 JJP MLAs have declared their support to BJP candidates in the Lok Sabha polls, and it is getting hard for the JJP to keep its flock together. After parting ways with the BJP, the JJP, which draws its support largely from the agrarian class, primarily the Jat community, has upped the ante against its former partner. In March this year, when the BJP replaced Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar with Nayab Singh Saini, it indicated the party's strategy to sharpen its caste-based politics pivoting towards the non-Jat constituency. Haryana witnessed a violent pro-Jat quota stir in the year 2016 and the agitation left Jats and non-Jats pitted against each other, straining inter-community relations. The Congress appears to be channelising its energy to form the next government for a full term of five years, instead of focusing on any possibility of a short-term gain. The political turmoil has cast a long shadow of doubt on the Saini government's legislative majority. The Governor should take appropriate measures to clear the doubts regarding the numbers.

Bipartisan rescue

Moderate congressional Republicans are in a dilemma over following Trump

In a rare display of camaraderie across the political divide, Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives rushed to the aid of Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson and, alongside others from his party, saved his speakership from termination, by a vote of 359-43 in support of his continuance in that capacity. The threat to his role as the functional head of the lower chamber of the U.S. Congress came from far-right Republican lawmaker and unabashed supporter of former President Donald Trump, Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia, whose grouse with Mr. Johnson was that he had shepherded and seen through a bill to provide a $95 billion national security aid package to Israel, Ukraine and other U.S. allies in Asia, with the bill for military support to Kyiv coming in at $61 billion. "By passing the Democrats' agenda and handcuffing the Republicans' ability and influence legislation, our elected Republican Speaker Mike Johnson has aided and abetted the Democrats and the Biden administration in destroying our country," Ms. Greene said, in a speech on the floor of the house that was booed by her fellow Congressmen. In March, Ms. Greene had filed a motion that would trigger a vote to remove Mr. Johnson, and earlier this week she had warned that she would be bringing that motion to a vote. While Mr. Trump is said to have complimented Ms. Greene in a post on the Truth Social platform, even he said that he believed that Republicans were "not in a position" to be voting Mr. Johnson out.

To a significant extent, the House has become the testing ground for factional supremacy within the ranks of the Republican Party, a simmering conflict that has intensified as the presidential election of November 2024 has drawn closer. The lower house witnessed a similar pattern of turmoil during the election of Mr. Johnson's immediate predecessor, California Congressman Kevin McCarthy, who had to engineer no fewer than 15 rounds of voting to finally secure the Speaker's chair. Ultimately Mr. McCarthy was dismissed from the role in late October 2023 when his tenure was abruptly ended by a motion to vacate foisted by members of the House Freedom Caucus. This ultra-conservative group has broadly backed the political agenda of Mr. Trump and routinely attacked 'mainstream' Republican lawmakers who have relied on bipartisan cooperation to get bills passed, including critical funding for U.S. allies. Even as Voting Day approaches fast from the horizon, moderate congressional Republicans are faced with the festering dilemma that to win their re-election bids they cannot be seen as spoilers who made it harder for Congress to forge critical bipartisan legislation, yet the popularity of Mr. Trump and the stubbornness of his House ideologues make it difficult for them to repudiate a more combative approach to politics.

The message from U.S. campuses, protesting students

Paula Chakravartty

is James Weldon Johnson Associate Professor of Media Studies at New York University (NYU)

Vasuki Nesiah

is Professor of Practice in Human Rights and International Law at New York University (NYU)

In 1985, when American campuses were roiling with protests against apartheid South Africa, the legendary African-American feminist poet and philosopher, Audre Lorde, reflected that America was "the most powerful country in the world" but also "a country which stands upon the wrong side of every liberation struggle on earth". Lorde noted that this filled her with both a sense of dread and a sense of urgency. Dread and urgency, once again, have driven students across campuses in the United States to protest against the catastrophe in Gaza. During the anti-apartheid protests calling for divestment at campuses in the late-1980s – when we ourselves were students – university administrators were embarrassed about aligning with the White apartheid state of South Africa. Today, with Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian racism so normalised in the U.S., university administrators are proudly aligning with this genocidal war. Armed police guard our libraries, check-points have been placed across our campus and we are learning that a police siege of our campuses is the new normal in the modern U.S. university.

Students are educating each other

Across the country, student protesters have a unified set of demands: Disclosure and divestment in corporations complicit in weapons manufacturing and the Israeli occupation of Palestine; "Cops off Campus"; and protecting pro-Palestinian speech and activism across the university. The call for divestment can be traced to the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement beginning in 2008 that was inspired by the anti-racist, anti-apartheid student movement that Audre Lorde was addressing. The call for "cops off campus" can be explained by the abolitionist critiques of the police as a racist institution amplified in the wake of the George Floyd protests of 2020, along with the fact that this generation in universities today were mobilised into activism against the gun violence that has plagued them in schools since childhood. Finally, the call for the protection of pro-Palestine speech and activism is a reflection of the history of university administrators' complicity in the "Palestine exception" to academic freedom made especially evident since October 2023.

In New York University (NYU), our students, whose leadership includes African-American, Arab-American, South Asian and anti-Zionist Jewish students among a multi-racial coalition, are educating each other on the history of the Levant and its diverse peoples and traditions in the region and the diaspora. They are convening teach-ins on the legacies of colonialism and racial violence and the fraught complexities of historic Palestine, post-Balfour, post-holocaust, post-Nakba, post-Oslo. They are studying apartheid as a technology of governance from native reservations, to apartheid South Africa to Jim Crow America, to settler colonial rule from Palestine to Kashmir. They are analysing the necessary distinctions between Anti-Semitism and Anti-Zionism, between criticism of racism against Jewish people and criticism of the ethno-state of Israel. They are also learning about the history of Palestinian resistance – of political campaigns such as BDS and the Great March of Return, of the poetry of dissent by Mahmoud Darwish and Mosab Abu Toha, from the theatre of the oppressed to the Freedom Theatre from the Jenin Refugee Camp, of the meaning of terms that have been demonised by the U.S. and western media, such as intifada and 'from the river to the sea'. They are studying the political economy of occupation and the money trail from Washington to Tel Aviv to Riyadh, from corporations' profits from Israeli settlements to our university donors and trustees, from the university investments to the war that is being waged on the other side of the globe. The teach-ins and 'people's universities' are about students taking back their right to education, speech and dissent from a history of repression of Palestine solidarity in the U.S., including, and perhaps especially, in our classrooms and campuses.

> Inspired and informed, students are forging solidarities to disrupt the ideological and economic ties that bind the American university to the forces of genocide

University clampdowns

From the beginning of the war, many university administrators began instituting disciplinary procedures against expressions of pro-Palestine solidarity and activism directed against the state of Israel, while banning local chapters of national organisations such as the anti-Zionist Jewish group, Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP) and Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP). As the war escalated, student protests proliferated, and university surveillance and crackdown of protests became ever more punitive. Meanwhile the Joe Biden administration doubled down on support for Israel's war effort and right-wing politicians convened congressional hearings with university presidents to interrogate them on campus political culture. It is in this context, six months after the war began and even as the number of dead in that period had climbed to over 33,000, that students, feeling unheard and muzzled, channelled their protest into peaceful encampments in their universities. Even as the repression intensified, these de-occupation encampments spread to campuses across the country.

These protests can be situated in the specifics of the current historical conjuncture, but the use of the term "de-occupy" also speaks to a larger analysis of the university's role in colonial, imperial and corporate extractivism. Thus, it invokes the histories and geographies of American military occupation from the American Indian Wars, to the occupation of Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, to U.S. meddling in Haiti and across the Americas to the wars of Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq. In New York, this movement echoes the Occupy Wall Street Movement of 2011 against the grotesque inequality of U.S. society. These students know there is a bloody connective tissue between the economic and the military, between the war and the siege, between the bombs and the famine. But this is not just a New York moment. From the University of Florida, to the University of Texas, from Emory University in Atlanta to Cal State Sacramento, the students chanting for divestment and against Israel Defense Forces abuses come to those demonstrations with deep knowledge about the history of racialised police brutality. Across the country, it is a movement that has been shaped fundamentally by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movements that seek to dismantle the U.S. policing apparatus that disproportionately surveils, arrests and jails Black and Brown communities. Similarly, the Standing Rock movement against the Dakota Access oil pipeline that travelled through first nations territory, was crucial in raising generational awareness about settler colonialism and the links between the U.S. and Israel as settler colonial states, and the links between occupation and dispossession. Social media savvy and alert to the narrative wars, these students are raising the alarm, refusing big media spin and forging solidarities from Georgia to Gaza, Harlem to Hebron.

Radical futures

We write this in the wake of the NYU administration calling on the New York Police Department to arrest NYU students in a violent invocation of the strong arm of the law as the partner to the McCarthyite surveillance and stifling of campus speech. Rather than shedding light on this repression, the conservative and liberal media have together platformed university administrators overseeing the corporatisation and militarisation of higher education. From coast to coast, our students have risked and endured suspensions and arrests in resolute solidarity with the people of Gaza. They have used their privilege as students in the heart of empire to expose and disrupt the ideological and economic ties that bind the American university to the forces of genocide. In turn they have been inspired by struggles in historic Palestine and the Palestinian diaspora, those who studied and taught in all the bombed out schools and universities of Gaza that exist today only in peoples' memories and their visions for a future in a free Palestine. In this they have joined Audre Lorde's radically hopeful vision in that same piece that we cited at the beginning: "We can join together to effect a future the world has not yet conceived, let alone seen."

An AI-infused world needs matching cybersecurity

Charu Kapoor

is Country Director, NIIT Foundation

Last year, an incident of a frantic mother who had received an ominous call from "kidnappers" who had 'kidnapped' her daughter, raised an alarm in the U.S. Senate about the detrimental impact of artificial intelligence. The news took the nation by a storm as the said "kidnappers" and the daughter's voice were nothing but hackers utilising generative AI to extort money. With such instances on the rise, the human perception of what is real and what is merely generative AI is slowly eroding.

Sophisticated cyber threats

While it is true that generative AI has exceptionally transformed how we operate, with its integration into sectors such as education, banking, health care, and manufacturing, it has also transformed the paradigm of cyber-risks and safety as we know it. With the generative AI industry projected to increase global GDP by as much as $7 to $10 trillion, the development of generative AI solutions (such as ChatGPT in November 2022) has spurred a vicious cycle of advantages and disadvantages. According to a recently published report, there has been a 1,265% increase in phishing incidents/emails, along with a 967% increase in credential phishing since the fourth quarter of 2022 arising from the exacerbated utilisation/manipulation of generative AI.

With sophisticated cyber threats on the rise, organisations and individuals are susceptible to the novel avenues of cyber-attacks, pushing firms to adapt to ever-evolving technology. As per a study conducted by Deep Instinct, around 75% of professionals witnessed an upsurge in cyberattacks in the past year alone, while 85% of the surveyed respondents have attributed the increased risk to generative AI.

It becomes imperative now, more than ever, to develop solutions through collaborative avenues to safeguard confidential information, identities, and even human rights.

As generative AI continues to mature, newer, more complex threats have arisen: through cognitive behavioural manipulation, critically dangerous incidents have surfaced, with voice-activation toys and gadgets that encourage dangerous behaviours in children and/or posing a grave threat to one's privacy and security. Simultaneously, remote and real-time biometric identification systems (such as facial recognition) have further jeopardised the right to privacy and massively endangered individuals on several occasions in recent times.

> With increasing misuse of generative AI, ensuring that consumers can navigate digital spaces safely has become crucial

While generative AI has significantly impacted productivity across the industrial realm with 70% of professionals reporting increased productivity, increasing manipulation via generative AI (specifically over the past couple of years) has resulted in the the spiralling vulnerability of organisations to attacks, with most organisations citing undetectable phishing attacks (37%), an increase in the volume of attacks (33%), and growing privacy concerns (39%) as the biggest challenges.

The recent identification, by several cybersecurity conglomerates, of complex hacker groups using generative AI solutions has raised an alarm – with AI models being leveraged for translating and identifying coding errors to maximise the impact of cyberattacks.

With such multifaceted cyberattacks on the rise, robust initiatives have become necessary. While stringent ethical and legislative frameworks are underway to combat growing cybercrimes due to AI, loopholes and a lack of industrial understanding/comprehension in regulating generative AI persist.

The Bletchley Declaration

Considering the growing concerns amidst increasing misuse of generative AI, it becomes imperative to safeguard consumers against the challenges posed by such advanced technologies, allowing them to navigate digital spaces safely.

World leaders, too, have initiated collaborative efforts to understand the potential catastrophic harm caused by the detrimental utilisation of AI, as seen in the recent signing of the Bletchley Declaration at the AI Safety Summit. The countries that signed the agreement include China, the European Union, France, Germany, India, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States.

At the institutional level, stern policy-led efforts are pivotal to bolstering the stance against increasing challenges via solutions such as enhancing the stance for watermarking to identify AI-generated content. This could aid in reducing cyber threats from AI-generated content, warning consumers to take appropriate actions. Further, a collaborative effort between institutional and industrial stakeholders could necessitate the process of improving and implementing a realistic, practical, and effective framework, with the inclusion of feedback from the public to further strengthen the drafting of these regulations.

Foster digital awareness

At the corporate level, greater emphasis is required to accommodate digital awareness via occupational media and digital literacy training sessions, fostering robust digital fluency in the workspace while identifying and tackling gaps in digital knowledge among employees. This could further equip the workforce to efficiently navigate the digital landscape, identify credibility, and verify the sources for authentication.

However, for a truly holistic approach to cybersecurity in an AI-driven world, we cannot overlook the crucial role of non-governmental organisations and other outreach organisations that introduce individuals to the wonders of the digital world, and simultaneously equip them with the essential tools of cyber literacy. By fostering a digitally savvy citizenry from the ground up, we can build a more robust defence against the evolving threats in this AI-driven digital landscape.

As we move towards developing more sophisticated systems and technologies, collaborative efforts are paramount to harbour a sense of security, enabling individuals and organisations to further empower communities to safeguard their personal interests and identities.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Racial analogy

I cannot help but wonder at those who take offence when someone says they look 'African' or 'Chinese'. So, is looking 'white' a compliment then? Who is being racist here? Taking Sam Pitroda's comments on diversity in India out of context is very clearly politically motivated.

Anandhi N.,
Chennai

When Sam Pitroda said what he did about India's morphological diversity, almost all the mainstream channels blew the issue out of proportion. I found that they were being more racist than anyone else. News tickers read: 'Sam Pitroda likens southern Indians to Africans'. The discourse in the Indian media has, sadly, hit a new low.

Ratheesh Chandran,
Thiruvalla, Kerala

Though I may not agree with the choice of words that Sam Pitroda used, I understand, in the larger context, that he was talking about unity in diversity. He could have articulated this in a much better way.

Mukund Tathacharya,
Chennai

Mr. Pitroda's pattern of making insensitive remarks is detrimental to the values of inclusivity and unity that our country stands for. The government must take a firm stance against such discourse.

M. Ramdas Menon,
Kallai, Kozhikode

The survivors?

It is shocking that in the incidents of the alleged assault on women by the MP from Hassan, a case now caught in the political crossfire in Karnataka, the concern seems to be about who released the clips. Not a word is being said about the plight of the survivors.

Veena Rajagopal,
Bengaluru

Are independent journalists on YouTube replacing TV journalists?

Ravish Kumar,

a senior journalist, was formerly with NDTV. A Ramon Magsaysay award winner, he now runs a YouTube news channel with more than 10 million subscribers

Kunal Purohit

is an independent journalist and researcher, and the author of 'H Pop: The Secretive World of Hindutva Popstars'

PARLEY

In 2022, a Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS)-Lokniti survey in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung showed that TV channels dominate as the news source in India, despite poor trust levels in them. In 2023, a Global Fact 10 research report showed that more and more Indians are now placing their trust in YouTube and WhatsApp for news. Are independent journalists on YouTube slowly replacing TV journalists in India? Ravish Kumar and Kunal Purohit discuss the question in a conversation moderated by **Radhika Santhanam**. Edited excerpts:

Why do you think more and more Indians are turning to YouTube for news?

Ravish Kumar: If they are doing that, it will be good for the country. Godi media [a pejorative term that refers to media outlets that are biased towards the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government] cannot do journalism anymore. Whoever is watching Godi news channels or reading certain newspapers knows that the news shown/published does not have anything in it or cannot be trusted. Many of the sources that disseminate news are being controlled (by the government). Even pro-Modi voters know that there isn't any news, information, or questioning involved in TV news. Let us take an example. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is not contesting from Amethi this time. Every journalist has reported on it and has said that Mr. Gandhi is scared, which is fair. But in Jammu and Kashmir, where the government abrogated Article 370, the BJP, which aims to secure 370 seats across the country, is not contesting any of the three Lok Sabha seats. What can be bigger news than the fact that the BJP has run away from this Union Territory? So, more than trust, there is a huge decline in content.

To be sure, I am mindful of the fact that there are many good journalists in India, but the scale of those who are not good is huge. People have to go somewhere to get news and analysis. There is no society in the world that I am aware of that can survive without news. So, this is why they go to YouTube. However, it would not be right to say that there is complete trust in YouTube. It is still in the buffering stage: people are trying to figure out where to go to get their news.

On YouTube, too, there are many challenges. Many people speculate and overstep in their analysis, and their language is different. YouTube seems like an alternative journalistic platform but it is in a nascent stage and will take a lot of time to evolve. The reach and scope of TV is much higher. But it's good that there is a marginal platform which people support.

Kunal Purohit: Since 2014, we have seen two processes happening simultaneously. First, TV media has become more and more pliable to the extent that people looking for critical information are becoming disappointed. Second, there has been a constant de-legitimisation of the media right from the top: the Prime Minister has called us 'news traders', his Ministers have called us 'presstitutes'. This was done to such an extent that people began losing faith in what the news can show us. So, they started looking for sources of information that they could trust. And in their search, they reached YouTube.

YouTuber Manish Kashyap joins the BJP. PTI

A lot of those on YouTube don't call themselves journalists, they call themselves creators. Isn't this a problem?

RK: What is the nature of YouTube? They are all creators and alongside they are journalists or they evolve into journalists. They have the convenience of calling themselves journalists or creators. You, for instance, don't have that option. But I do believe that reporters can only grow in an institutionalised environment where there is knowledge sharing. If someone wants to become a journalist, the newsroom is the best place. If I have to do a story on health and I am in your newsroom, I can speak to the person covering health. I operate the same way now too: I reach out to various journalists – for example, The Hindu Data Team. YouTube has its limitations. That's why I say it is evolving. By taking a vox pop, you can get a smart reaction from people, but that doesn't feed journalism. There are lots of flaws in the vox pop journalism that we see on YouTube. But one hopes that more skilled people who can be trusted will come on to the platform and do journalism ethically – the kind you cannot find on TV.

Kunal, you have written that each time a news event occurs, more people are likely to go on Facebook and YouTube to search for content online to inform themselves. What did you find in your reporting?

KP: Studies show that more and more Indians turn to YouTube than even Google search now, whether to find a recipe or news. I saw how much the Hindutva pop stars I profiled over four years were working to serve that audience. They realise that the idea always is to "set narratives" online each time something big happens. As our attention spans are short these days, people don't necessarily have the bandwidth to be processing a news event for days. So, the trick is to plant a narrative in people's minds and say this is how you should be looking at this event.

> That the Prime Minister interacts with YouTubers and awards them tells you how highly the establishment thinks of YouTube as a medium for setting the narrative
> **KUNAL PUROHIT**

When I was reporting, Kavi Singh, a 25-year-old singer from Haryana, and her father were shooting for a video and that's when they realised that Article 370 was abrogated in J&K. They rushed back home and within a few hours, they created a song saying "now that Article 370 is abrogated, you can hear chants of 'Jai Shri Ram' in Kashmir". That was their takeaway. They told me they also feel like they are journalists as they are "setting narratives". So, the definition of journalism keeps expanding. This is a tricky, dangerous slope to be on. The (right-wing) IT cell operates in unison. That's how some narratives become dominant.

There is a lot of disinformation on YouTube. Do you think it can and should be curbed?

RK: As Kunal said, there is a huge ecosystem out there. There is a parallel system being created but the misinformation and disinformation fight is huge and difficult. But what has happened is many YouTube journalists amplify the reports published in good newspapers so that it reaches a different set of viewers, who value it greatly. Amplification gives us satisfaction. Journalists get the best satisfaction from doing original stories, but we should not guard this pleasure too much. We should amplify good stories so that good journalism is known. This is more important.

The Broadcasting Services (Regulation) Bill, 2023, seeks to bring OTT and digital news platforms under its ambit. What do you think of the Bill?

RK: With this Bill, the possibilities on YouTube will end. There are community guidelines on YouTube. If you follow them, there is not much of a problem. But if a notice comes from the government, then you will have to take it (video or channel) down. This election, a lot of the challenge to the government's narratives have come from YouTubers. The government doesn't want this to grow. It has even tried to shut down channels with 10 million subscribers. If it is so emboldened, it can finish off the careers of YouTubers. And it'll be difficult to continue on YouTube. But news will find its way to people.

KP: I want to add to what Ravish said about disinformation. We need to separate the likes of Ravish from the pro-establishment "news channels", which are merely an extension of the right-wing IT cell. I analysed some of them for a story. One of the biggest ones is called NMF news. One of its reports said Wayanad has become an ISIS colony and another said Bangladeshis and the Rohingya have infiltrated Jharkhand and are converting the tribal people by marrying them. This is a clever way of doing propaganda, where you're officially doing news but you're actually just trumpeting what the propaganda channels are telling you to do.

How do you deal with this? There are many cases where the government is going after independent news channels on YouTube, as Ravish said, but what they are not doing as much is going after the likes of NMF News.

Some independent journalists on YouTube say they have no idea why their views have suddenly dropped. YouTube has pulled down some channels without really explaining why, so there is also lack of transparency, and there is arbitrariness. The government with the Bill has made its intention clear. It wouldn't have bothered to look at regulating YouTube if it didn't think YouTube was damaging it enough.

RK: The Prime Minister addressed about 5,000 content creators recently. Second, Kunal spoke of how the right-wing supports some YouTubers. The best example of that is the YouTuber Manish Kashyap. He spread fake news on Tamil Nadu, got arrested, and has now joined the BJP. So, social media has come a breeding ground for future leaders of the party. And these people eat into the share of those who have done hard work for the party on the ground.

KP: Yes, the fact that the Prime Minister interacts with YouTubers and awards them tells you how highly the establishment thinks of YouTube as a medium for setting the narrative.

Do you think this trend could affect the election outcome?

RK: Whether it does or not is a separate question. But many of the fake narratives have not succeeded this election. The BJP created a kingdom of narratives, but now lots of people have climbed its walls as challengers. In 2014, the ground was empty. In 2019, a few plants were growing. Now, there are many trees.

To listen to the full interview
Scan the code or go to the link
www.thehindu.com

NOTEBOOK

Getting inked without information

In some remote areas, people do not know which political parties are in the fray, but they vote so that they are not struck off the rolls

Purnima Sah

Every time I have travelled to rural India, I have been astounded by how much the people of urban India take access to basic necessities for granted. These necessities remain a dream for some people, as I learned recently while travelling in north Maharashtra, a State known to be progressive.

During a visit to Jalgaon in the sub-region of Khandesh, the District Collector, Ayush Prasad, suggested that I visit Ambapani hamlet in Yawal tehsil to get a first-hand experience on how polls are conducted. This is an area without roads or concrete pathways, phone connectivity, or public transport.

As the steep, muddy pathway that leads to the hamlet is uneven, passes through forest area, and can only accommodate one two-wheeler at a time, officials walk to Ambapani hamlet with electronic voting machines. The Pawara tribal people who live in this region do not live in clusters; they occupy land in the hills and build homes away from one another. Apart from the lack of mobile network, I was surprised to find that there was no electricity or water connection in the area with a population of 810. Of them, 310 were registered voters and had voter IDs. They said that they voted for the first time in 1994. Back then, they walked 13 km to the nearest gram panchayat in Moharale village to exercise their franchise.

The people felt they do not matter to the government. They were unaware of the political parties in the fray and their party symbols. They said they had never seen an election campaign and no political party had ever visited them. But they said they would vote nevertheless. "We were told to vote. We were told it is our duty to do so," said Rupsing Bajarya Pawara, a resident.

How then do you decide to select a political party, I asked. Swali Bai Pawara,35, giggled. "We do not understand these pictures (party symbols) on the box (ballot box), so we press whatever appeals to us the most," she said.

They did not know why they were expected to vote either. I told them that voting enables citizens to elect people to power and to make their voices heard. They laughed. "Are you joking? Who are these people who will make our lives better? You have come here, you have seen how difficult it is to reach here. Why would anyone want to visit us," asked Rambai Pawara, a resident. Ungya Gurja Pawara, another resident, asked me whether the voting process could really make their life better and if so, how.

Then why do you vote, I asked. They said that they feared the forest department would displace them.

I found similar reasons driven by fear in the hamlets of Nandurbar in Satpura range. In Nashik's Trimbakeshwar tehsil, the Warli, Katkari, and Kokni tribal people do not have government supplies such as ration, but they vote religiously. This is because, they said, they feared they would be declared dead if they do not. "What if the government strikes off my name from their document if I do not vote? My family has to suffer then," said Bhaudu Ramu Pingle, a resident.

In India, there is great buzz about the Lok Sabha election. Political parties campaign daily, their remarks make front-page headlines. But travelling to remote corners of one of the largest States, I realised that in some parts of India, communities are still waiting for their voices to be heard. These tribal communities play a role in electoral politics, but they do not make informed decisions. It is not pride, anger, or even a wish for change that drives them; it is fear of losing something. These are people who have religiously exercised their franchise, but unfortunately, they have got nothing in return.

purnima.sah@thehindu.co.in

PICTURE OF THE WEEK

Beating the heat

During a heatwave in Kerala, people flock to Paniyeli Poru, an ecotourism centre on the outskirts of Kochi, where the Periyar river flows over an expansive bed of rocks. This is the junction where several strands of the river, flowing in from Malayattoor, conjoin. THULASI KAKKAT

FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MAY 10, 1974

Rajya Sabha returns Finance Bill

New Delhi, May 9: Parliament passed the Finance Bill, 1974 to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government for 1974-75 when the Rajya Sabha returned the Bill to-day. The Opposition fought the Bill at every stage through a series of amendments which were rejected by the House – four after the Opposition forced a division and the rest by voice vote. A number of amendments related to increased levy on post cards, whose withdrawal was strongly urged by several members.

Other amendments related to withdrawals of levies on kerosene, further raising the income tax exemption limit and withdrawal of levies on various articles of common use like toothpaste and sweets.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY 10, 1924

Copyright action

At the High Court Mr. Justice Devadoss passed orders in the case in which the Cambridge University Press had applied for an injunction to restrain Messrs. P.R. Rama Ayyar and Sons from selling their publication of XIX Century Prose prescribed for the B.A. Degree Examination 1925. Mr. R.N. Ayyangar who appeared for the plaintiff said that the defendants had copied in their book several passages from the notes published by the plaintiff press on the Essays which was the textbook prescribed.

From Page One

JJP, INLD seek floor test, say govt. lost majority

Mr. Hooda said that the Congress had sought an appointment for its delegation to meet with the Governor in view of the prevailing political situation, adding that his party would also parade all 30 of its MLAs before the Governor.

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini said that his government had proved its majority just over a month ago and could prove it again if required, but noted that the Opposition seemed to be in a hurry.

Mr. Saini advised Mr. Chautala to instead worry about the Lok Sabha election as he had lost the faith of the people.

₹558 crore seized by EC in Karnataka

Besides this, the Income Tax department seized ₹54.72 crore from a DCC Bank in Bidar, ₹46.84 crore from a private merchant in Bengaluru, said Venkatesh Kumar R., Additional Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) in Karnataka.

"Apart from liquor, drugs, and cash in huge amounts, the common freebies confiscated this time include cookers, non-stick utensil sets, mixies, smart watches, LED TVs, fans, grocery coupons, saris/other clothing material, gold ornaments, and silver utensils. These seizures were mainly done in godowns and manufacturing units where the production register did not tally with the physical stocks available with them," Mr. Kumar told *The Hindu*. While 42 expenditure observers were deployed in the State, the ECI – recognising the challenges posed by the influence of money and muscle power in this election – had also posted retired IRS officer B. Murali Kumar as a special expenditure observer in Karnataka.

MCC relaxation

With a prolonged election process this time, the Election Commission has received several requests from Ministers and chairpersons of boards and corporations seeking relaxation of the model code of conduct.

Lifting export ban raises onion price

"If it rains well between June and August, the price will be stable, but with onions, there is no guarantee until the bulbs are out of the ground. Both too much and too little rain can damage the bulbs," Mr. Udayashankar said.

In 2023, the price of onions breached the ₹100 mark due to a supply crunch and subsequently crashed by January 2024 due to the export ban.

Export allowance

Just a week before the export ban was lifted, Lakshmikanth, a farmer from Lingavarahatti in Chitradurga district, sold his onions for as low as ₹10 a kg. That same variety is now ₹28 a kg. Like him, many farmers from Chitradurga, which is one of the major onion growing regions of the State, sold their onions for lower rates, with no hopes of price going up. Some even left them in the fields instead of harvesting as the bulb size was too small due to weather factors. However, now they are happy that their new crops will get reasonable rates.

'No official communique from Canada in Nijjar case'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Days after Canada arrested three individuals in connection with the murder of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) here said the Canadian authorities have informally communicated that the individuals are Indians but Ottawa has not provided any 'official communique'.

"Let me first make it clear that no specific or relevant evidence or information has been shared by the Canadian authorities till date. You will therefore understand our view that the matter is being prejudged. Obviously, there are political interests at work. We have long maintained that separatists, extremists and those advocating violence have been given political space in Canada," said MEA official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, in the first formal response on the matter.

Air India Express cabin crew call off strike after mediation

Airline agrees to reinstate 25 sacked members of the staff; Chief Labour Commissioner to hold another meeting on May 28 to discuss employees' concerns on allowances, alleged discrimination

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Air India Express has agreed to reinstate 25 cabin crew whose services were terminated after a large number of them reported "sick" since May 6, while the flight crew have agreed to report to duty following a meeting mediated by the Chief Labour Commissioner (CLC) in New Delhi on Thursday.

The representatives of the airline management said that all the issues raised by the cabin crew pertaining to alleged discrimination emanating from the merger with erstwhile AirAsia India and the removal of allowances will be resolved. The CLC will hold another meeting on May 28 on the matter.

On the third day of the protest on "leave", Air India Express was forced to cancel 85 flights across its network. Another Tata Group airline, Air India, supported it by operating flights on 20 of its routes, according to a media statement issued by Air India Express.

Flights interrupted: Air India Express on Thursday cancelled 85 flights due to disruptions because of cabin crew shortage. PTI

The CLC called a conciliation meeting after over 200 cabin crew at Air India Express started reporting "sick" from May 6 resulting in flight disruptions.

According to a letter addressed to one of the cabin crew personnel late on May 8 informing him of his immediate termination, the airline said, "Your act of reporting sick for work amounts to a concerted action with a common understanding to not operate the flight and disrupt services of the company. This is not only in violation of the applicable laws but also violates the Air India Express Limited Employees' Service Rules."

Contract terms

The Air India Express cabin crew are unhappy over "preferential treatment" for employees of the erstwhile AirAsia India resulting in certain postings granted to the latter.

They also complained about unfair contractual terms which offered Air India Express crew employment of one or five years, while those from AirAsia India could remain employed till they turned 58 years. They rued the removal of certain allowances, including House Rent Allowance and Dearness Allowance. Air India and its low-cost international airline Air India Express were privatised in 2022 and handed over to Tata Sons.

SC stops grant of mining leases in the Aravalli range

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday stopped the grant of fresh mining leases and renewals in what, according to a Forest Survey of India (FSI) report, constitute the Aravalli ranges and hills. The FSI report defined the Aravallis to include the hills and a uniform 100-metre-wide buffer zone around the downsides of the hills.

"Until further orders, though all States wherein the Aravalli ranges are situated will be at liberty to consider and process applications for grant of mining leases and renewals thereof, no annual permission shall be granted for mining in the Aravalli hills and ranges as defined in the FSI report," a Special Bench of Justices B.R. Gavai and A.S. Oka directed.

The court said its order should not be construed as a ban on legal mining activities carried out through valid permits and licences.

Bail to Kejriwal to campaign will incentivise criminals to become politicians: ED

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) on Thursday cautioned the Supreme Court against granting interim bail to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the liquor policy case, saying that if "unscrupulous" politicians are given bail for campaigning, none of them can ever be arrested, as elections are an "all-year-round phenomenon" in India.

There were 123 elections across the country in the past five years alone, the ED said in a 44-page affidavit.

Decision today

The affidavit coincided with an announcement made in open court by Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who heads the two-judge Bench which heard the Kejriwal case, that the court would pronounce its order on the

Arvind Kejriwal

question of interim bail to the Chief Minister on May 10. The case is listed as item 50 before Justices Khanna and Dipankar Datta on Friday.

Grant of interim bail to Mr. Kejriwal to campaign for the ongoing Lok Sabha election would be anathema to the rule of law and equality, and create a precedent which would permit "all unscrupulous politicians to commit crimes, avoid investigation under the garb of one election or the other, be it municipal, panchayat, Assembly or general elections, and thereafter, upon being arrested, seek interim bail to campaign for one election or the other", the ED said. In a federal structure, one election is as good as another, it noted.

Giving the Chief Minister interim bail would create two separate classes of people in the country. "The ordinary people who are bound by the rule of law and politicians who can seek exemption from laws with the hope of securing interim bail to campaign for elections," the ED argued.

An interim bail for Mr. Kejriwal to canvas votes for the Aam Aadmi Party as a "star campaigner" would incentivise every criminal to be a politician and be in campaign mode throughout the year while committing rampant offences, the ED said. Politicians can claim no special status higher than that of an ordinary citizen, it added.

Taliban are trying to install their nominees in India, cautions Afghan diplomat

Suhasini Haidar
NEW YORK

Days after Afghanistan's most senior diplomat in India resigned over charges of smuggling, diplomats still loyal to the previous democratic regime in Kabul warn that the Taliban are making another attempt to install a nominee in India, and urged India and other countries not to "normalise" ties with the Taliban. The warnings came amidst turmoil within Afghanistan's Delhi Embassy and Consulates in Mumbai and Hyderabad and a scandal involving a top diplomat accused of smuggling gold, that has left the missions in India practically leader-less.

"Normalisation and recognition should not occur until they take tangible actions aligned with the demands of the Afghan people and the international community, focusing on

Naseer Ahmad Faiq

the formation of an inclusive system based on the will of the people, justice, and the rule of law," Afghanistan's Acting Permanent Representative to the United Nations Naseer Ahmad Faiq told *The Hindu*, pointing to many countries in the region that have now accepted Taliban-appointed diplomats.

However, the United Nations has refused to grant accreditation to new diplomats at the UN mission, citing the Taliban's unkept promises on inclusive government, human rights and education and employment rights to women and girls.

Diplomatic sources confirmed to *The Hindu* this week that the Afghanistan Embassy in Delhi has also received documents appointing an India-based Afghan academic reportedly cleared by the Taliban Foreign Ministry in Kabul for the post of Acting Consul-General in Mumbai. If granted permission by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the academic, who is currently pursuing a Ph.D. at the South Asian University in Delhi, could become the first Taliban-appointed diplomat to take office at Afghan missions in India.

Mr. Faiq acknowledged the reports on the new consul's appointment attempt in India, saying that the Taliban are "inserting people" into missions worldwide as a means to "gain recognition" .

Trinamool urges EC to take action against Suvendu Adhikari

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Trinamool Congress lodged a complaint with the Election Commission against BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari seeking criminal proceedings against him for "concocting" rape allegations and running a fake narrative regarding the Sandeshkhali incident.

The complaint is based on a purported video in which a man claiming to be Gangadhar Kayal, the BJP's mandal president in Sandeshkhali, is heard saying that Mr. Adhikari, the Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly, was behind the whole conspiracy.

In the sting operation video shot by a news platform and shared by the Trinamool Congress on social media, Mr. Kayal is heard saying sexual harassment complaints were filed at the behest of Mr. Adhikari. The BJP has rejected the video accusing the Trinamool of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to discredit them.

"The BJP concocted the rape allegations in Sandeshkhali and ran a fake narrative, simply to defame Bengal and bring a bad name to the Trinamool Congress. All this was done to seek pure political advantage," Trinamool Congress Rajya Sabha member Sagarika Ghose told reporters after submitting the complaint. She added that in the video, it is clearly seen that the women were paid ₹2,000 to ₹3,000 to make these complaints.

"We have urged the Election Commission to direct the police to start criminal proceedings against Mr. Adhikari. We also want the other BJP leaders on the video, to be detained and questioned. We hope this kind of gross dishonouring of women never happens again just for drawing political benefit," Ms. Ghose said.

Findings of EAC-PM working paper being misreported, says think tank

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Successive Censuses have shown that growth rate of Muslims is on the decline, the PFI said

The Population Foundation of India (PFI) on Thursday night expressed deep concern about media reports misrepresenting the data set put out by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) in a recently published working paper on the share of religious minorities in 167 countries, including India.

The PFI, an independent think tank working on population trends and reproductive/sexual health, said that media outlets were misreporting the findings contained in the working paper "to spread alarm regarding the growth of the Muslim population". "Such interpretations are not only inaccurate but also misleading and baseless," it said.

In the working paper titled "Share of religious minorities: a cross-country analysis (1950-2015)" published on May 7, the EAC-PM examines the shares of majority and minority religious communities in populations of 167 countries, including India.

The paper said that for India, while the share in population of Muslims increased by 43.15% in this time period, the share in population of Hindus decreased by 7.82%, adding that in 1950, Hindus' share in population was 84.68%, which came down to 78.06% in 2015. Similarly, Muslims' share had risen from 9.84% to 14.09%.

The 2011 Census had counted 96.63 crore Hindus, 79.8% of the population and 17.22 crore Muslims, 14.2% of the population, at the time.

The working paper has expressed the difference in populations between 1950 and 2015 as a percentage of the population of those respective religious groups in 1950. As a result, the Muslim community's difference in share of population, which is a rise of 4.25 percentage points, is being expressed as a "43.15% increase" compared to the Muslim population as of 1950. Using this method, the paper has concluded that Hindus' share declined by 7.82%, Christians' rose by 5.38%, Sikhs' went up by 6.58%, and that of Parsis went down by 85%.

It has not used this presentation of data for Buddhists and Jains. If one were to apply the same calculations, it would show the Buddhist population had increased by 1,520% when in fact their share had increased from 0.05% to 0.81% in the total population.

Meanwhile, the PFI pointed out in its statement, "Successful family planning programmes in Muslim-majority countries like Bangladesh and Indonesia have resulted in lower birth rates compared to India. These countries have achieved this through higher levels of female education, greater employment opportunities, and better access to contraceptive choices. This clearly shows that fertility decline is influenced by development factors rather than religious affiliation."

"The media's selective portrayal of data is an example of misrepresentation that ignores broader demographic trends," the PFI statement said.

The PFI added that successive Censuses have shown that the decadal growth rate of Muslims has been on the decline for three decades now. It also noted that National Family Health Surveys had also shown that the total fertility rate (TFR) in India was declining, with the largest decline being seen amongst Muslims.

Vyjayanthimala, Chiranjeevi receive Padma Vibhushan

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Actors Vyjayanthimala Bali and Konidela Chiranjeevi; the late M. Fathima Beevi, the first woman judge of the Supreme Court; and *Mumbai Samachar* owner Hormusji N. Cama were among the eminent persons given the Padma awards by President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday.

Ladakh's spiritual leader Togdan Rinpoche and-Tamil actor 'Captain' Vijayakant (both posthumous), BJP leader O. Rajagopal, and Kundan Vyas, group editor and CEO of Gujarati newspaper *Janmabhoomi*, were also given the Padma awards. While 90-year-old Ms. Bali and 68-year-old Mr. Chiranjeevi were given the Padma Vibhushan, Mr. Cama, Mr. Rajagopal, Mr. Vyas, Vijayakant, Rinpoche, and Beevi were given the Padma Bhushan.

APPEAL

Ms. Rai Das Daughter of Ananda Das 5 years admitted in Mazumdar Shaw Medical Center, is suffering from Thalassemia Major. The only curative treatment is Bone Marrow Transplant. We are planning TCR Alpha / Beta and CD 45RA Depletion Therapy for this patient. The estimated cost of the transplant in this hospital is approximately **Rs. 42,30,000/-**.

Please send donation however small and save the girl. Cheque/D.D/M.O. favouring **Save Poor Lives** A/c Rai Das. **Our Account Details:** S/B Account No. 20000913487. State Bank of India, R.A. Puram and IFSC CODE: SBIN0001855, you can donate through Google Pay No. **9884607377**, UPI ID: **savepoorlives@oksbi**. All donations are exempted under 80G of I.T. ACT.

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ELECTIONS 2024

Ajit targets uncle Sharad Pawar at rally

While he still regarded his uncle, Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar, as a "deity", rebel NCP leader and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Thursday expressed his disappointment with the NCP patriarch and said that he did not get the opportunity to head the party just because he was not Mr. Sharad Pawar's son.

Mr. Ajit Pawar made these remarks during a public address in the Shirur Lok Sabha constituency.

"Pawar *saaheb* is our *daivat* [deity] and there is no doubt about it, but every person has his time. After crossing 80, new people should be given opportunities. Had I been his son, I would have been given a chance. But since I am not, there was no chance," Mr. Ajit Pawar said.

Ajit Pawar made the remarks during a public address in the Shirur constituency. PTI

Sena factions spar using film dialogues

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Priyanka Chaturvedi's comment "*Mera Baap Gaddar Hai*" (My father is a traitor) against Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's son Shrikant Shinde, who is contesting from the Kalyan Lok Sabha constituency, has sparked a political row between both the Shiv Sena factions, with each picking up a line from the Bollywood movies *Deewar* and *Bulandi*.

Ms. Chaturvedi's comment drew reactions from Mr. Shinde's Shiv Sena and the ruling alliance *Mahayuti*.

Shinde faction spokesperson and deputy leader Sheetal Mhatre picked up a dialogue from *Bulandi* – "*Billi ke daant gire nahi aur chali sher ke muh mein haat daalne*" (Cat's teeth haven't fallen and wants to put hand in lion's mouth).

I am telling you again and again that Owaisi*ji* is working directly with the BJP. Wherever BJP feels, he [Owaisi] fields someone to push back others

PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA
Congress leader

EC orders repolling at Gujarat booth

The Election Commission on Thursday ordered repolling on May 11 at Parthampur polling station in the Dahod constituency in Gujarat. Vijay Bhabhor, son of BJP candidate Jasvantsinh Bhabhor, had live-streamed voting there on May 7. The incident was reported as attempted booth capturing.

It seems that voting in three phases is unsettling Modi... It seems he thinks that situation would change by bringing in communal thoughts

SHARAD PAWAR
NCP (SP) Chief

Focal point: Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, the Congress's Baharampur nominee, campaigning on Thursday. ANI

Political bigwigs battle it out in fourth phase of polls in Bengal

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Eight Lok Sabha constituencies across five districts of West Bengal will go to the polls in the fourth phase of election on May 13. These constituencies in south Bengal will see political heavyweights such as State Congress president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury contesting from Baharampur, and Trinamool Congress leaders Mahua Moitra and Shatrughan Sinha contesting from Krishnanagar and Asansol, respectively.

The BJP candidates include former State BJP president Dilip Ghosh from Bardhaman Durgapur, S.S. Ahluwalia from Asansol and Jagannath Sarkar from Ranagath. Two World Cup-winning cricketers, Yusuf Pathan and Kirti Azad, are testing the political pitch from Baharampur and Bardhaman Durgapur, respectively. Both of them have been nominated by the Trinamool.

The fourth phase will see a total of 75 candidates in the fray. The BJP leadership, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah, has campaigned for BJP candidates Amrita Roy and Mr. Ghosh. Ms. Roy, who hails from the erstwhile Krishnanagar royal family, is the richest candidate in this phase with total assets estimated at ₹554 crore declared in her election affidavit. She is contesting against Ms. Moitra.

Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah have also campaigned for Mr. Ghosh, who is pitted against Mr. Azad. Mr. Ghosh had won the previous Lok Sabha polls from Medinipur but this time he was nominated from Bardhaman Durgapur. The Baharampur constituency in Murshidabad district has thrown up a triangular contest with Mr. Chowdhury, a five-time MP defending his fiefdom, from the Trinamool and the BJP candidates.

Of the eight seats, the Trinamool won five in 2019, the BJP won two and the Congress got one.

Interesting contest

Birbhum, where both the seats were won by the Trinamool in 2019, has thrown up an interesting contest. The BJP had to change its candidate at the eleventh hour. The candidature of Debasish Dhar was cancelled during scrutiny and it nominated Debtanu Bhattacharya. He is contesting against three-time Trinamool MP Satabadi Roy.

The BJP had to also change its candidate for Asansol. The party had initially fielded Bhojpuri singer and actor Pawan Singh, but faced criticism as some of his songs were considered derogatory of Bengali women. It then nominated two-time party MP S.S. Ahluwalia. He will be contesting against Mr. Sinha.

There are a varied range of issues dominating the election from the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, particularly in the two constituencies bordering Nadia district – Ranaghat and Krishnanagar. The issues of closed industries and flight of capital are crucial to Asansol and Bardhaman Durgapur.

Inter- and intra-party violence has dominated politics in Birbhum district where the Birbhum and Bolpur constituencies are going to the polls.

'BJP's next target is to change the Constitution, abolish reservation'

Telangana CM says Cong. will win 14 of the 17 seats in the State; he says Modi is refusing a prominent role for South Indians in political representation and adds that Adani and Ambani are the double-engine government that the BJP talks about

INTERVIEW

A. Revanth Reddy

R. Ravikanth Reddy

NAGARA GOPAL

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has stirred a hornets' nest by claiming that the BJP will abolish reservation, forcing Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat to react. He believes it is not a political narrative for the election but a real issue given the thought process of the RSS. He also speaks about the north-south divide and Centre-State relations. Excerpts:

You have created a new narrative on reservation forcing Prime Minister Modi to react. Is it just a political issue? Do you think it is possible in the country to abolish reservation?

I wish to speak on the existing reality and how the RSS wants to change the Indian Constitution and push its agenda through its political front, the Bharatiya Janata Party. With the BJP's support, it has pushed its agenda – Article 370, Citizenship Amendment Act, Triple Talaq, Ayodhya Ram temple. Their next target is changing the Indian Constitution and abolishing reservation. There is a link between this agenda and the BJP not taking up the 2021 Census, which was being done from the British era every 10 years.

Mr. Modi knows that people are demanding census and also the caste census. Why isn't the BJP asking for a majority but insisting on 400 seats? Because they can amend the Constitution only with a two-thirds majority.

Do you think Rahul Gandhi has the persona to take on Mr. Modi and present an alternative before the country?

In Telangana, before the Assembly election, everyone said KCR [BRS chief K. Chandrashekhar Rao] is the biggest personality. So how come Revanth Reddy defeated KCR? When Indira Gandhi was defeated by some not-so-famous politicians of that era, then what is the big deal about defeating Narendra Modi? In a democracy, the public will have the final say.

How do you see the north-south divide narrative which politicians like you are referring to quite often?

Mere statements will not divide the country but actions will divide. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is refusing a prominent role for South Indians in its political representation and there is a feeling that South is being denied its financial share. Telugu is the second largest spoken language in India after Hindi.

But there is just one Cabinet berth for 42 MPs from two Telugu States while Gujarat with just 26 MPs gets seven Cabinet berths. Uttar Pradesh has 12 Cabinet Ministers in the Centre. All the prime posts like Prime Minister, Home Minister, Defence Minister, Urban Development Minister, Rural Development Minister, Commerce Minister have gone to North Indians.

These issues will come up for discussion. There is a feeling of discrimination on the next delimitation. The Government of India should explain the terms of reference.

How do you react to the two names – Ambani and Adani – which are often spoken about?

With regard to Adani and Ambani, there is a feeling that they are the double-engine *sarkaar* that the BJP talks about.

People also feel Adani and *Pradhani* are the 'twin-engine' government at the national level.

You have been critical of the Centre. Since you said your focus will be the State, how do you see Centre-State relations? How do you have a relationship if you are in Opposition? Telangana has been having a lot of borrowing issues with the Centre and you are going to face it?

I'm in the war zone as of now. I have to act accordingly. When I go back to my Chief Minister's responsibility fully after the poll code, I will perform as a Chief Minister. I will maintain my good relations with the Prime Minister. India is a Union of States. The Prime Minister is the elder brother of all the Chief Ministers. So, he has to play that role. I have requested the Prime Minister and Finance Minister to restructure my loan system.

Has there been any strategic planning for these elections?

We have done our work and I am sure Congress will win 14 seats in Telangana out of 17 seats. We have made commitments and we have to deliver.

(For the full interview, visit bit.ly/revanthinterview)

Omar writes to EC on 'cancellation of poll rallies'

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

National Conference (NC) candidate Omar Abdullah on Thursday approached the Election Commission and accused the J&K administration of "unjust cancellations of scheduled campaigns" in Baramulla.

"I am writing to express my utmost concern regarding the recent unjust cancellations of prior permissions granted to the JKNC by the Superintendent of Police, Sopore, where the police were informed about the schedule to campaign and organise events," Mr. Abdullah said.

He said the SP was demanding the party "reschedule the same to other dates". "The order is devoid and silent of any reason as to why campaigning rallies and meetings should be rescheduled. This denial of permissions is aimed at derailing the political campaign of the party and preventing the party from effectively carrying out its campaign," he said. The police have reportedly asked the NC to reschedule campaigns between May 9 and 18.

"The decision to cancel these permissions is not only arbitrary but also a blatant and egregious attempt to surreptitiously disadvantage the JKNC," he said, in the letter to the EC.

BJP, INDIA bloc locked in direct fight in Jharkhand Phase 1

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Union Minister and three-time Chief Minister Arjun Munda is in the fray in the first phase of polling in Jharkhand, which is slated for May 13, with four Lok Sabha seats at stake: Palamu, which is reserved for the Scheduled Castes; and Singhbhum, Lohardaga, and Khunti, reserved for the Scheduled Tribes.

Top leaders of the National Democratic Alliance and the Opposition Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA), including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, have campaigned in these four constituencies, which are spread across 10 districts and 23 Assembly segments.

Most of the contests are direct fights between the BJP's nominees and the candidates put up by the parties of the INDIA bloc.

In Singhbhum, Congress MP-turned-BJP candidate Geeta Koda is up against the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha's Joba Manjhi. In Khunti, Mr. Arjun Munda is being challenged again by Kalicharan Munda of the Congress, who lost by a tiny margin last time. In Palamu, the BJP's V.D. Ram is pitted against political debutant Mamta Bhuiya of the Rashtriya Janata Dal. In Lohardaga, the BJP's Samir Oraon will take on Sukhdev Bhagat of the Congress, though a JMM rebel is hoping to play spoiler as well.

JMM rebel in the fray

Lohardaga is likely to see a triangular fight as Bishunpur MLA Chamra Linda, who won the Assembly seat on JMM ticket, has now jumped into the Lok Sabha fray as an Independent candidate. In 2004, 2009 and 2014, Mr. Linda had unsuccessfully contested Lok Sabha elections as an Independent candidate, though he secured over one lakh votes on his second and third attempts.

In 2019, the BJP fielded Sudharshan Bhagat from Lohardaga, but his margin of victory against the Congress's Sukhdev Bhagat was just 10,363 votes, prompting the party to drop him and name Mr. Oraon as its candidate instead.

Of the five Assembly segments in Lohardaga – Mandar, Sisai, Bishunpur, Gumla, and Lohardaga – all are currently represented by INDIA bloc MLAs, with three from the JMM and two from the Congress.

Many interior Maoist violence-affected areas across the Singhbhum constituency will witness polling for the first time ever, or after a gap of many decades. Polling teams and materials will be air-dropped by helicopter to enable voters living in Saranda, Asia's densest sal forest, to exercise their franchise.

Singhbhum has long been a stronghold of the Koda family. Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Madhu Koda had won the Lok Sabha election here in 2009 and his wife, Ms. Koda, won the seat as a Congress candidate in 2019, despite the strong wave in favour of Mr. Modi. However, months before the 2024 Lok Sabha election, Ms. Koda quit the Congress and joined the BJP.

The constituency is spread across six Assembly segments: Saraikela, Chaibasa, Jagannathpur, Manoharpur, Chakradharpur, and Majhgaon. More than 70% of the population belongs to the Ho tribe. So far, the Congress has won the Singhbhum Lok Sabha seat five times while the BJP has won thrice.

Union Tribal Affairs Minister Mr. Arjun Munda is seeking a second term as Khunti MP after a close shave in 2019, when he defeated Mr. Kalicharan Munda by just 1,445 votes. He faces the same opponent this time as well.

Khunti seat

The Khunti Lok Sabha seat is spread across six Assembly segments: Kharsawar, Tamar, Torpa, Khunti, Simdega, and Kolebira. It is home to tribal icon Birsa Munda's Ulihat village, where Mr. Modi paid tributes last November and launched the PM Janman scheme and the Union government's Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra.

The BJP has won this seat the most times, with former Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha Kariya Munda having won seven times.

Palamu will also be a tough fight for the INDIA bloc, as the BJP has held the seat since 2014. Jharkhand's former Director-General of Police (DGP) Mr. Ram is more than confident that he can win the seat for the third time after Mr. Modi's public meeting for him on May 4. He has always maintained a low profile, and avoided controversy.

Though his opponent Ms. Bhuiya has no prior political experience, the caste she belongs to has a population of about 4.5 lakh in Palamu, which is a constituency reserved for SC candidates.

Of the six Assembly segments here – Daltonganj, Bishrampur, Chhatrapur, Husainabad, Garhwa, and Bhawanathpur – four are held by the BJP, while Hussainabad is represented by the Nationalist Congress Party led by NDA ally Ajit Pawar. Only Garhwa is held by the JMM.

Of the 14 Lok Sabha seats from Jharkhand, the BJP won 11 in 2019 while its NDA ally, the All Jharkhand Students Union, bagged one seat; the remaining two seats, Chaibasa and Rajmahal, went to the Congress and the JMM respectively.

Past results

A look at the 2019 Lok Sabha election winners and runners-up for the four seats from Jharkhand going to the polls on May 13, along with their vote shares

Constituency	Winner	Vote share (%)	Runner-up	Vote share (%)
Khunti	BJP	45.9	Congress	45.8
Lohardaga	BJP	45.5	Congress	44.2
Palamau	BJP	62.5	RJD	22.9
Singhbhum	Congress	49.1	BJP	40.9

■ Of the four seats going to the polls in Jharkhand in the fourth phase of Lok Sabha elections, Singhbhum, Khunti and Lohardaga are reserved for Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Palamu is reserved for Scheduled Caste (SC)

Star player: Union Minister for Tribal Affairs and Khunti constituency's BJP candidate Arjun Munda during an election rally. ANI

Four of the 14 seats in the State are going to the polls on May 13; the BJP had won 11 seats in 2019

INBRIEF

Will fight for Bhim Mission till my last breath: Akash Anand

Days after he was removed as the national coordinator of the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Akash Anand on Thursday vowed to continue fighting for the Bhim Mission till his "last breath" and said he accepted BSP chief Mayawati's commands. Mr. Anand, 28, who is the nephew of Ms. Mayawati, called her a role model for the entire Bahujan community. "Respected Mayawati*ji*, you are an ideal for the entire Bahujan Samaj, crores of countrymen worship you. It is because of your struggles that today our society has got such a political power due to which the Bahujan Samaj has been able to live with respect and dignity. You are our universally accepted leader. Your orders are our obedience. I will continue to fight for Bhim Mission and my society till my last breath," Mr. Anand said on X.

In response to PM's roadshow, Tejashwi to hold 'job show'

To counter a roadshow by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Patna on May 12, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav on Thursday said he would hold a "job show" in the city. "If Modi*ji* is doing a roadshow or air show, I will do a job show on the streets of Patna. The only agenda of the PM is to establish dictatorial rule and destroy the Constitution of Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar and democracy," he said. Mr. Yadav, who is the Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly, challenged Mr. Modi to address issues like unemployment. He alleged that Mr. Modi was eager to end reservation system. Asked about Mr. Modi's accusation about the Congress having a nexus with "Ambani and Adani", the RJD leader suggested that the Prime Minister should get an inquiry done. "What to say on this, if the PM has any such information, he should get an inquiry done, why to talk nonsense," he said.

LS polls reopen old wounds from anti-Agnipath protests in Bihar

Youngsters have lost interest in joining the Army after the introduction of the scheme, say coaching centres; the Opposition promise to scrap Agnipath finds resonance in places such as Buxar and Arrah, which go to the polls in last phase on June 1

A.M. Jigeesh
BUXAR/ARRAH

Raushan Kumar Sinha, 37, a national secretary of the Left-leaning All India Youth Federation (AIYF), was in jail for about 10 months for allegedly instigating protests in Bihar against the Agnipath scheme that turned violent in the three days between June 17 and 20 in 2022.

Amid the Lok Sabha election, he is again busy contacting groups of Army aspirants to use their vote against the BJP and he reminds them that the Opposition INDIA bloc has promised to abolish Agnipath and reinstate the old system of Army recruitment. "I was targeted for political reasons. All youth organisations announced protests. Students who were preparing for Army joined the protests in their thousands. Even now, the administration and the police pick up youngsters saying they were part of the protests," Mr. Sinha says maintaining that Agnipath is a major electoral issue in Bihar.

High unemployment

"Agnipath" and "Agniveer" are the key points of discussion in Buxar and Arrah, which go to the polls in the seventh phase on June 1. Hundreds of students and youngsters prepare for defence, paramilitary and police jobs in these places, where unemployment among youth is higher than the national average.

Ritesh Srivastav, a lawyer and activist who has worked among the protesters, said areas such as Arrah, Buxar and Sasaram have a number of hard-working girls and boys aspiring to government jobs. What they expect from the governments is a solution to the problem of unemployment. "But there are no facilities for them. They even sit at railway stations, but crack examinations, including the civil service. Often, their hard work goes in vain," he lamented.

When Agnipath was announced, Mr. Sinha and Mr. Srivastav said, boys who were preparing for Army service opposed the scheme. "The question they asked was why should we join the Army for just four years? What will happen to our jobs after four years? No one from the government could give satisfactory answers to these questions," Mr. Srivastav said.

These questions resonated with every group of aspirants. During the protests, slowly, they started organising and the movement took a massive shape. They took to the streets and blocked the trains.

Applicants undergoing a physical test during an Army recruitment rally under the Agnipath scheme at Danapur in Patna. FILE PHOTO

Vinay (name changed) was one of them. Talking to *The Hindu* from Buxar High School situated in the heart of the city, the youngster said he had worked hard to join the Army for more than four years. A government school, established in 1887, gives a reading room and sports ground for the aspirants for free. There are private libraries too which students who can afford utilise. "Here, we get a chair and a table and those who practise for physical examinations use the school ground," he said.

In 2022, the recruitment rallies were over and aspirants, including Vinay, were waiting for the results. "I was passionate about serving the Army. There was none in the Army from my family. I was confident of passing the physical tests. I had trained for four years. I was part of the National Cadet Corps [NCC]. I had won several medals and received the NCC's 'C' certificate," he said adding that a case was registered against him for participating in the protests against Agnipath. He cleared all tests and only had medical tests pending in the Army recruitment rally but the process was cancelled due to Agnipath. "Now I have crossed the age limit. Tears come to my eyes when I think of this. It has been a personal loss," Mr. Vinay said, adding that he is now preparing for exams for certain State government posts. He is disappointed that the anti-Agniveer protests did not succeed as much as the farmers' protests.

Most of the students in Buxar School or the Maharaja Bahadur Ram Ran Vijay Prasad Singh College, Arrah, are from poor families who cannot afford to go to Patna or Delhi and join big coaching centres. "We are all voters here. We are also aware of the promises of the Opposition that Agnipath will be scrapped. We hope this scheme will go," said another student, who also wished anonymity.

The protests were spontaneous, they said, adding that no one invited or instigated the students even though the administration put the blame on some coaching centres. "We were preparing for Army jobs. So, we were not scared, but we were concerned about the plight of our family members," said Mahesh (name changed), another aspirant who participated in the protests.

Now, a huge number of students have stopped dreaming of joining the Army. "This is not good for the country and for the Army," said Sudhir Singh, who runs a coaching institute named Commandant Academy. "I have been training Army aspirants for more than 20 years. Agnipath is injustice to the youth who wanted to choose the Army as their career," Mr. Singh said.

Subhash, another aspirant, said the Opposition's promise of scrapping Agnipath is welcome but the issue of unemployment should be addressed seriously. "We will have to wait and watch what they are going to do," he observed sceptically.

Rahul Gandhi addressing the youth in a video. PTI

Congress targets PM over 'drain of wealth', crony capitalism

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleged that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had stopped "abusing" industrialists Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani and hinted at a deal, the Congress stepped up its counter-attack on the BJP and Mr. Modi over the issue of crony capitalism.

In a fresh video addressing the youth, Mr. Gandhi said Mr. Modi would resort to "drama and distraction" in the next four to five days since he knows that he won't be Prime Minister again and the election is slipping out of his hands.

"Unemployment is the biggest issue and Narendra Modi *ji* had promised you (the youth) two crore jobs every year. He lied, instead announced demonetisation and implemented a flawed GST but did everything for the benefit of people like Adani," Mr. Gandhi said in his video.

"On June 4, the INDIA bloc will form the government and by August 15, the process of giving employment to 30 lakh youth will start under *bharti bharosa* [job assurance] scheme," he added.

In a separate statement, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh accused the Modi government of aiding the "drain of wealth" from ordinary Indians to crony corporates.

"Since 2014, we have seen a 'drain of wealth' from Bharat *ke parivaar* (India's families) to Modi *ka parivaar* (Modi's family). This is the intentional effect of the Prime Minister's '*Hum Do Humaare Do*' policy of favouring his cronies. The National Accounts Statistics released on May 7 show that India's net household savings have decreased by ₹9 lakh crore in three years," Mr. Ramesh claimed.

He said loans to households have risen from ₹7 lakh crore to ₹14 lakh crore in the last three years.

United Opposition gives a tough fight to Giriraj in Begusarai

Amarnath Tewary
BEGUSARAI

Begusarai has long been known as the "Leningrad of Bihar" or "Mini Moscow" because of the political dominance of the Communist Party of India (CPI), which emerged in the region to counter the feudalism allegedly practised by the Congress for decades.

Over 100 political workers belonging to the Communist and Congress parties had been murdered in the villages of Begusarai over the years. The BJP entered Begusarai's political space in 2014 when its candidate, Bhola Singh, won the Lok Sabha election.

The party's presence peaked in 2019 when its nominee, Giriraj Singh, won the constituency, defeating CPI candidate Kanhaiya Kumar by over four lakh votes.

The Begusarai constituency has also been a stronghold of the upper caste Bhumihar community. Since Independence, every candidate who has won the seat hailed from this community, except in 2009, when Janata Dal(U) candidate Monazir Hassan won the poll. This time, Mr. Giriraj Singh, a Bhumihar, is pitted against Awadhesh Kumar Rai, a former three-time CPI MLA from the Bachhwara Assembly constituency, who comes from the backward Yadav caste.

Out of total 21 lakh voters in Begusarai, there are over three lakh Bhumihars, while Yadavs and Muslims account for over 2.5 lakh voters each. "But one does not know that backward and extremely backward class voters outnumber all these caste groups in the constituency," said Abhishek Kumar, a young voter who also runs a news portal.

United Opposition

In 2019, the Opposition's votes were divided as both the CPI and the Rashtriya Janata Dal had put up their own candidates, facilitating Mr. Singh's smooth win by a huge margin. Mr. Rai, however, has been fielded as a joint Opposition candidate. "This time, our candidate is going to get the votes of all Opposition *mahagatbandhan* parties. Votes will not be divided this time and I am confident that the CPI will pocket the Begusarai seat in this election," Shatrughan Prasad Singh, a former CPI MP who held the Begusarai seat from 1996 to 1998, told *The Hindu*.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah with BJP candidate Giriraj Singh during a Lok Sabha election rally in Begusarai on April 29. ANI

Yogendra Sharma was the first CPI MP from Begusarai in 1967. The party represented the Begusarai Lok Sabha constituency as well as the erstwhile Ballia Lok Sabha constituency in 1967, 1980, 1989, and 1996. The Congress too has represented the constituency several times since 1952.

Mr. Giriraj Singh is currently unpopular even among his own Bhumihar community, because of his "loudmouth" and "Hindu-Muslim" rhetoric. Recently, a video went viral on social media in which Mr. Singh, who is also a Union Minister, can be heard saying: "I do not need the vote of traitors... I strongly hate the *tukde-tukde* gang."

"Any attempt to give communal colour to the election is wrong. I have lodged a complaint," said Mr. Shatrughan Prasad Singh.

'Modi is essential'

Voters' resentment against Mr. Giriraj Singh is so high in the constituency that he was recorded in another video appealing to voters to vote for him just to make Narendra Modi Prime Minister again. "Please do not punish Modi*ji* for my fault. Vote for Modi*ji*, not for me)," he said.

"Yes, we will vote for PM Modi, not for this loudmouth Giriraj Singh," said Ashwani Kumar, alias Babl*uji*, at Simaria village. He is the grandson of Hindi poet Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, who also hailed from the Bhumihar community.

A group of backward class men from Pipradih village in Bihat area were playing cards on a muggy afternoon on May 6 on the premises of a local temple premises. "He (Giriraj Singh) should not win the election this time as he does Hindu-Muslim in every issue of the constituency and is also a big loudmouth. But we tell you, he will win the polls because of PM Modi, though with a very thin margin," they said.

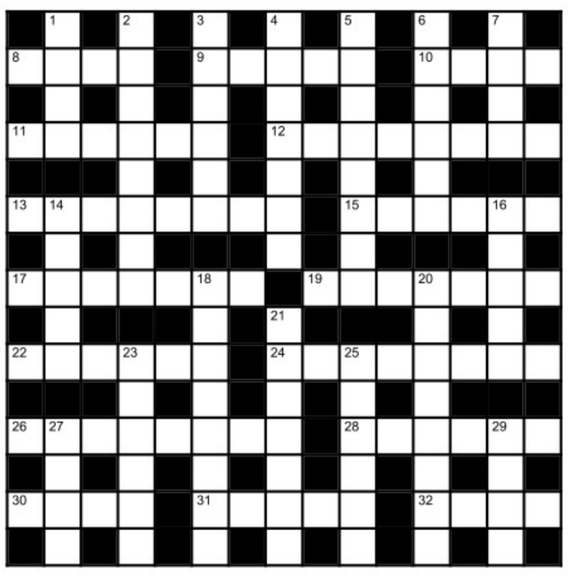
Begusarai goes to the polls in the fourth phase on May 13.

TH CROSSWORD + 14171

(set by Incognito)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8 Largest dolphin found in Windsor, California (4)
9 Heather appears in esoteric art (5)
10 Call for shower of pellets from the sky (4)
11 Secret agents surround king, producing pointed objects (6)
12 Replied, "A new sewer is constructed next to top of drain." (8)
13 Restore US city tax on commencement of employment (8)
15 Queasy about hot model's style of performance (6)
17 A doctor for canines, amongst other things? (7)
19 Warped space? It is medically uncontaminated (7)
22 Rapscallion releasing father lion is rowdy (6)
24 Knotting bootlaces having only one loop instead of two can result in hindrance (8)
26 Chap wearing scarlet and journalist taken into custody (8)
28 In my case, a boy gives rise to discomfort (6)
30 Returned 1 component (4)
31 Figurines that may be solid? (5)
32 Dash when changing lane (4)

Down

1 Catch injured rat sitting on piano (4)
2 Juliet wrongly took cab to get military footwear (8)
3 Spear lobbed around his heart in Iran of olden times (6)
4 Sprats and a bit of egg cooked around 1 for nautical marauders (7)
5 Boy helps musicians (8)
6 Mad Hatter's warning (6)
7 Perfect penalty (4)
14 English-men return by middle of day for evacuation (5)
16 Cold knoll's iciness (5)
18 Also laid out dressing that can be consumed! (5,3)
20 White teeth nobleman sinks into baked goodies (8)
21 Dominating driver wrongly hoards, after loss of bearing, old gear-wheel at first (4,3)
23 Chinese expressions of creative imagination and graphic representations (6)
25 A snack American uncle gets with dosa, after spitting out its first bit (6)
27 Biblical character from European Union touring South America (4)
29 Watch face and ring (4)

SUDOKU

9			8			3		
8					2			
		6	9				1	
		5						8
		3	6	8	5	4		
2						9		
	1				7	6		
			4					7
		9			1			3

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

	R	C		E		J		S		R		K		
Z	E	R	O		G	H	O	S	T		T	O	W	N	S
	V		N		E		H		O		M		E	
L	E	A	V	E	S			N	I	C	T	A	T	E	S
	L		E		T					K		N			
G	A	R	R	I	S	O	N			I	N	S	E	C	T
	T		S				A		E				A		
W	I	N	E		P	E	T	E	R		M	A	R	K	
	O					E		T				A		D	
E	N	B	L	O	C			Y	U	M	M	I	E	S	T
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L	A	B	E	L	L	E	D		U	N	R	E	A	L	
	C		W		I		Y		S		O		R		
S	T	R	A	T	A	G	E	M	S		A	S	P	S	
	S		Y		R		S		E		D		S		

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

3	8	1	6	4	5	9	7	2
4	6	7	3	9	2	1	5	8
9	2	5	7	1	8	4	6	3
5	7	8	2	6	1	3	4	9
2	4	6	9	3	7	8	1	5
1	9	3	5	8	4	6	2	7
6	5	9	1	2	3	7	8	4
8	3	2	4	7	6	5	9	1
7	1	4	8	5	9	2	3	6

FAITH

Ambal blesses Syama Sastri

Ambal is not only pleased by the devout, but She also blesses such people. Residing in them as it were, Ambal ensures they leave a lasting legacy for the faithful of future generations. Syama Sastri, the seniormost of the Carnatic musical trinity, was one such devotee who had the divine benediction of Ambal, said Suchithra Balasubramanian in a discourse.

Born in 1762, in the Tamil month of Chittirai, Sastri, as with Tyagaraja and Muthuswamy Dikshidhar, used music and musical compositions to raise God consciousness in all.

Hailing from a family that for generations prayed to Goddess Kamakshi, Sastri was singularly blessed by Her. While his family, based in Thanjavur, was not known for musical knowledge, a musician saint who visited his family for a few days identified the innate intelligence and bhakti of Sastri.

Realising that Sastri had the blessings of Kamakshi, and therefore assured of a glorious life, he encouraged him to first listen to the famed musician Adiappar, who composed the famed Viribhoni varnam. Sastri followed the advice faithfully, emerging as a great musician extolling the virtues of the goddess. He faced a few challenges but by the grace of Ambal, he overcame them all.

BIG LOSS

It's difficult to replace world-class bowlers like Shami, says Kirsten

VIJAY SONEJI

GT mentor Gary Kirsten felt Mohammed Shami's absence has hurt the side. "You do miss some players, like Shami, who was big for us in the last two years. It is difficult to replace world-class bowlers like him. There are talented youngsters in our group, but it takes time to find your feet against guys who want to hit every ball for a six."

NOBLE GESTURE

Titans to show support for cancer awareness with lavender jersey

X@GUJARAT_TITANS

Gujarat Titans is taking a stand against cancer, stepping on to the field and donning special lavender jerseys for the second year in a row. The players will wear the jersey during the final home game on May 13, 2024. This will serve as a reminder of the importance of early detection and access to quality healthcare.

SECRET OF SUCCESS

Backing of Cummins and support staff has helped a lot: Abhishek

M. VEDHAN

Unwavering support from Pat Cummins and the think-tank has played a big role in his success in the ongoing IPL, revealed opener Abhishek Sharma. "Our support staff and Pat (Cummins)... the way they think, I have never seen anyone else think like that. They're like 'Go out there and express yourself. Play as aggressively as you can, we'll back you'".

POWER PLAY

Abhishek and I picked our targets and got the job done: Head

M. VEDHAN

Travis Head was delighted by the way in which Sunrisers Hyderabad eased past Lucknow Super Giants on Wednesday. "It was awesome. Abhishek and I were very pleased with how we went about it in the PowerPlay. We picked our targets and got the job done. We spoke about NRR being important and I am glad at how it turned out."

Kohli in scintillating form as Royal Challengers stay alive

The opener slams a 47-ball 92 while Patidar, the No. 4 batter, smashes a 23-ball 55; Green and Karthik's cameos propel the Bengaluru side to 241, a total that proves beyond Kings' reach; Mumbai and Punjab bow out of the playoffs race

IPL-17

Shayan Acharya
DHARAMSHALA

Neither heavy rain nor the pelting hail could stop Virat Kohli (92, 47b, 7x4, 6x6) from bringing up his fifth half-century of the season and keeping Royal Challengers Bengaluru alive in the Indian Premier League playoffs race with a 60-run win over Punjab Kings here on Thursday.

Making the most of early reprieves, Kohli forged a 76-run third-wicket stand with Rajat Patidar (55, 23b, 3x4, 6x6), both putting the Kings bowlers under pressure with their power-hitting.

Though he fell eight short of a century – caught by Rilee Rossouw at deep extra-cover off Arshdeep Singh – Kohli entertained the fans who chanted his name throughout the innings.

With a tinge of grass on the surface, Kings opted to bowl; however, a sloppy show on the field let them down.

Kagiso Rabada was unwell and youngster Vidwath Kaverappa was handed a debut. The Karnataka seamer underlined his potential, claiming the wickets of RCB captain Faf du Plessis and Will Jacks, after he was denied a dream start when Ashutosh Sharma dropped Kohli off the third ball of the match.

Kohli got another life in Kaverappa's second over as Rossouw dropped a difficult catch. Even before the bowler could come to terms with his misfortune, Harshal Patel put down Patidar (on zero). Those misses went on to hurt Kings.

Once the two batters settled down, they tore the bowlers apart. Kohli went after the pacers; Patidar, on the other hand, began with three boundaries off Harshal and followed it up with three sixes off leg-spinner Rahul Chahar in the eighth over.

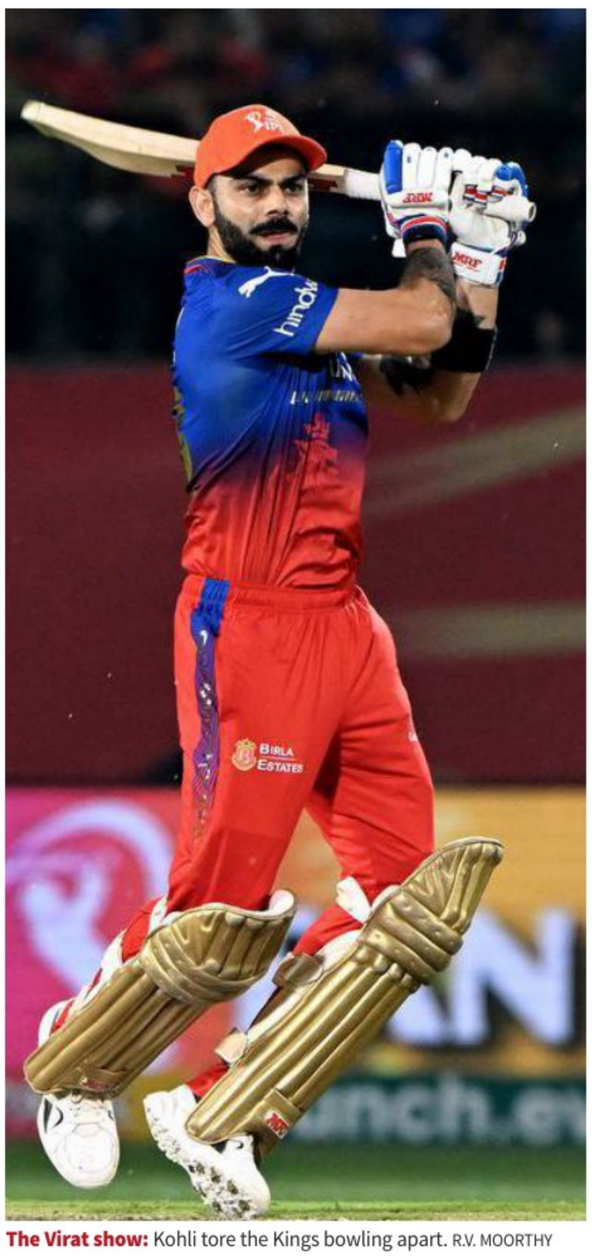
His sparkling fifty – his fourth in this edition – set up a run fest as a few Kings bowlers conceded at least 12 an over; Patidar then fell to Sam Curran.

Despite the rain interruption, Kohli remained focused and ensured that Patidar's dismissal did not affect the momentum.

Bringing up his fifty with a four off Liam Livingstone, Kohli struck a flurry of boundaries and added 92 for the fourth wicket with Cameron Green. Dinesh Karthik's cameo kept RCB going though Harshal claimed three wickets in the final over.

In reply, Rossouw's 27-ball 61 kept the hosts in the hunt as he stitched together a 65-run second-wicket partnership with Jonny Bairstow.

Kings were 75 for two in the PowerPlay, but once the South African fell to Karn Sharma, RCB bounced back through Mohammed Siraj and Lockie Ferguson. But the night belonged to Kohli who came up with a direct hit to run dangerman Shashank Singh out.



The Virat show: Kohli tore the Kings bowling apart. R.V. MOORTHY

SCOREBOARD

ROYAL CHALLENGERS
Virat Kohli c Rossouw b Arshdeep 92 *(47b, 7x4, 6x6)*, Faf du Plessis c Shashank b Kaverappa 9 *(7b, 2x4)*, Will Jacks c Harshal b Kaverappa 12 *(7b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Rajat Patidar c Bairstow b Curran 55 *(23b, 3x4, 6x6)*, Cameron Green c Curran b Harshal 46 *(27b, 5x4, 1x6)*, Dinesh Karthik c Curran b Harshal 18 *(7b, 1x4, 2x6)*, Mahipal Lomror b Harshal 0 *(2b)*, Swapnil Singh (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-6): 8; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 241.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-19 (du Plessis, 2.2 overs), 2-43 (Jacks, 4.4), 3-119 (Patidar, 9.6), 4-211 (Kohli, 17.4), 5-238 (Karthik, 19.1), 6-240 (Lomror, 19.4), 7-241 (Green, 19.6).

KINGS BOWLING
Kaverappa 4-0-36-2, Arshdeep 3-0-41-1, Curran 3-0-50-1, Harshal 4-0-38-3, Rahul Chahar 3-0-47-0, Livingstone 3-0-28-0.

PUNJAB KINGS
Prabhsimran Singh lbw b Swapnil 6 *(4b, 1x4)*, Jonny Bairstow c du Plessis b Ferguson 27 *(16b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Rilee Rossouw c Jacks b Karn 61 *(27b, 9x4, 3x6)*, Shashank Singh run out 37 *(19b, 4x4, 2x6)*, Jitesh Sharma **(Impact Player in place of Kaverappa)** b Karn 5 *(4b, 1x4)*, Liam Livingstone c Karn b Swapnil 0 *(2b)*, Sam Curran b Ferguson 22 *(16b, 2x4)*, Ashutosh Sharma lbw b Siraj 8 *(5b, 1x6)*, Harshal Patel c Ferguson b Siraj 0 *(1b)*, Rahul Chahar (not out) 5 *(5b, 1x4)*, Arshdeep Singh c Karn b Siraj 4 *(3b, 1x4)*; Extras (lb-2, w-4): 6; Total (in 17 overs): 181.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-6 (Prabhsimran, 0.4), 2-71 (Bairstow, 5.5), 3-107 (Rossouw, 8.6), 4-125 (Jitesh, 10.5), 5-126 (Livingstone, 11.2), 6-151 (Shashank, 13.4), 7-164 (Ashutosh, 14.6), 8-170 (Curran, 15.3), 9-174 (Harshal, 16.1).

RCB BOWLING
Swapnil 3-0-28-2, Siraj 4-0-43-3, Yash Dayal **(Impact Player in place of Patidar)** 2-0-22-0, Ferguson 3-0-29-2, Jacks 1-0-5-0, Green 1-0-16-0, Karn 3-0-36-2.

Toss: PBKS; **PoM:** Kohli.
RCB won by 60 runs.

Next assignment

RCB: May 12 vs **DC**
Bengaluru, 7.30 p.m.

PBKS: May 15 vs **RR**
Guwahati, 7.30 p.m.

Points Table

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
Kolkata Knight Riders	11	8	3	16	1.453
Rajasthan Royals	11	8	3	16	0.476
Sunrisers Hyderabad	12	7	5	14	0.406
Chennai Super Kings	11	6	5	12	0.700
Delhi Capitals	12	6	6	12	-0.316
Lucknow Super Giants	12	6	6	12	-0.769
Royal Challengers	12	5	7	10	0.217
Mumbai Indians (E)	12	4	8	8	-0.212
Punjab Kings (E)	12	4	8	8	-0.423
Gujarat Titans	11	4	7	8	-1.320

E: Eliminated

A battle between unsettled sides as CSK and GT clash in a must-win match

Willow watch: Williamson gets to the bottom of it by having a close look at Ravindra's bat. VIJAY SONEJI

S. Dipak Ragav
AHMEDABAD

The last time Gujarat Titans and Chennai Super Kings met at the Narendra Modi Stadium, the match was an IPL classic for the ages. In a thrilling rain-hit final last year, Ravindra Jadeja famously hit the required 10 runs off the last two balls to help CSK clinch its fifth title.

But ahead of their reverse-fixture clash here on Friday, the two teams are a pale shadow of their former selves.

The defending champion is locked in a tight mid-field battle and hanging by a thread in fourth place in the race to make the playoffs. It has been a start-stop campaign for the Super Kings, whose last four matches have alternated between a loss and a win.

Though the Ruturaj Gaikwad-led side is coming into this game after a victory against the Punjab Kings, the outfit is far from settled. The lack of runs from its main batters, particularly Ajinkya Rahane, continues to be a pain point, while the bowling attack in the absence of Matheesha Pathirana looks thin.

Meanwhile, the bottom-placed Titans have bigger worries heading into this must-win tie. The former champion hasn't yet nailed its ideal combination and is on a three-match losing streak.

Rashid Khan's poor form has been a key reason for the team's poor results, and the hosts would hope the Afghan spinner rediscovers his mojo and helps the side get out of its rut. GT has lost its last three meetings against CSK and will want to break this jinx on Friday to stay alive in the competition.

TODAY'S MATCH

GUJARAT TITANS vs. CHENNAI SUPER KINGS

Ahmedabad, 7.30 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD
Played: 6
GT 3 | CSK 3

PREVIOUS MEETING
CSK won by 63 runs, 2024

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1 (SD & HD) & JIO CINEMA

Dhoni. FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

If Dhoni bats too long, we risk losing him: Fleming

S. Dipak Ragav
AHMEDABAD

Explaining the decision to send M.S. Dhoni at No. 9 against Punjab Kings, CSK head coach Stephen Fleming said it was a calculated move to use the former skipper only in the last few overs.

"It is that time of the game when we are looking at more than the position. After recovering from knee surgery, there is a certain workload he (Dhoni) can manage," said Fleming.

"We want to keep Dhoni for what he does best, hitting sixes and fours in the last three or four overs, and he has done well this year. He is 'keeping as well as anybody, and his tactical advice to help the new captain is very important.

"Physically, it is risky and we saw it earlier in the season when he had a minor muscle injury. But he is okay (now). If he bats too long, we risk losing him," Fleming added.

Commenting on constantly changing the line-up, Fleming said it was part of the team's evolution.

"We are looking at horses for courses. Sometimes you must do things differently, otherwise the teams will catch you.

"We are aware that changing the team too often can be unsettling, but we are trying to make it a strength."

I know I will throw 90, but consistency is more important: Neeraj

Uthra Ganesan
DOHA

It is not easy being Neeraj Chopra. Even in the presence of some of the biggest names in world athletics, the spotlight remains firmly on him every time he gets ready to compete. It was no different on the eve of the Doha Diamond League on Thursday as Neeraj declared he was ready and raring to start his Olympic title defence at the season-opener here.

Flanked by reigning Olympic champions Steven Gardiner (400m), Miltiadis Tentoglou (long jump) and pole vault world champion Nina Kennedy, it was a largely Neeraj Chopra show and the 27-year old admitted, for perhaps the first time, that the Olympic or World Championships arena does matter.

"You don't feel it at that moment but you realise it later, when you leave the place, that it was a different feeling. In my mind, and in my performances, the aim is to push myself to the limit every time. But Olympics is very rare," he admitted in an exclusive interaction with *The Hindu*, reflecting on why records are often made or broken elsewhere.

"There are five Diamond League meets in a year, that's 20 chances to set a record or get a new mark in four years but only one Olympics. That in itself is a pressure thing. You have to adjust and manage your body, mind, everything to be working together perfectly at that level at that particular time to get a good result. Which is why I think even historically, many legendary athletes faltered.

"If you see Jan Zelezny or Thomas Rohler who otherwise had great performances but could not do it in the Olympics. I also felt it in Tokyo, the pressure of the moment and the arena... you know in your mind where you are standing and competing. It is not easy, but it's not impossible either," he insisted. The 90m question did pop up, yet again, and Neeraj deflected it in style, yet again, while throwing down the gauntlet for his competitors. "Preparations have been good, I had a good session in the morning also and I am ready for tomorrow [Friday]. I have been stuck between 88-90m and I really want to break this barrier. But my focus is to stay healthy and be consistent. This is one of my strong points, one of my greatest weapons. I know I will throw 90, but consistency is more important," he declared.

And his secret to keeping that weapon deadly is in his training. While his social media videos and reels only exhibit the physical workout Neeraj puts into his training sessions, the real deal is in what isn't seen.

"The most important thing is to be very clear of your target in your mind during training. I am always aware that I have won the Olympics and World Championships.

"I know that my introduction at every competition, till Paris at least, will be as the current World and Olympic champion. There is the added responsibility of handling it the right way. For others, it is a motivation to reach there. For me, it is a responsibility to handle it carefully," Neeraj explained.

Up for it: Neeraj says he's prepared and ready for the upcoming challenges. FILE PHOTO

INBRIEF

OMEGA ropes in Neeraj as sporting ambassador

Olympic and World championships gold medal-winning javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra has been roped in as the sporting ambassador of Swiss luxury brand for watches OMEGA, which is also the Official Timekeeper for this year's Paris Olympics. Neeraj was invited to the OMEGA boutique in Doha, ahead of his participation at the first leg of Diamond League on Friday.

Manika loses to Hina in the Saudi WTT quarterfinals

Manika Batra's run at the WTT Saudi Smash table tennis ended with a 7-11, 11-6, 11-4, 13-11, 11-2 defeat in 39 minutes to World No. 5 Hina Hayata in the quarterfinals in Jeddah on Thursday.

Balaji and Begemann advance to the semifinals

Sriram Balaji and Andre Begemann beat Adrian Andreev and Maks Kasnikowski 1-6, 6-4, [12-10] in the doubles quarterfinals of the €74,825 Challenger tennis in Francavilla al Mare, Italy.

Other results: €74,825 Challenger, Prague: Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals: Anirudh Chandrasekar & Niki Poonacha bt Mathiass Bourgue & Hugo Grenier 6-1, 6-3.
$82,000 Challenger, Wuxi, China: Doubles: Quarterfinals: Piotr Matuszewski & Matthew Romios bt Ray Ho & Ramkumar Ramanathan 2-6, 6-3, 10-8].

LIVE TELECAST

Bangladesh vs Zimbabwe: 4th T20I, FanCode, 5.30 p.m.
IPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m.
Ireland vs Pakistan: 1st T20I, FanCode, 7.30 p.m.
Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 12 a.m. (Saturday).
Serie A: Sports 18-1 & JioCinema, 12.15 a.m. (Saturday).
La Liga: Sports 18-1 & JioCinema, 12.30 a.m. (Saturday).

On the prowl: The victorious Indian women's team. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Radha, Richa set up India's series sweep

Former finishes as the highest wicket-taker in the series with 10 scalps while Smriti tops the batting charts with 116 runs

INDIA IN BANGLADESH

Press Trust of India
SYLHET

Radha Yadav (three for 24) ran through Bangladesh's top-order after Richa Ghosh's quickfire unbeaten 28 off 17 balls, setting up India's 21-run win in the fifth T20I and a 5-0 series sweep here on Thursday.

Chasing a 157-run target, Bangladesh began promisingly but collapsed against the left-arm spinner Radha.

Despite the rearguard act by Ritu Moni (37, 33b, 4x4) and Shorifa Khatun (28 n.o., 21b, 3x4), the hosts finished at 135 for six in 20 overs.

All-rounder Moni and Shorifa put on a resolute stand of 57 runs for the sixth wicket to lead the fightback and dial up the pressure on India, but the visitors prevailed eventually.

The partnership between Moni and Shorifa was also Bangladesh's highest for the sixth wicket in Women's T20Is, breaking the previous record between Sanjida Islam and Nigar Sultana (32).

Earlier, Richa played a cameo (28 n.o., 17b, 3x4, 1x6) to take India to 156 for five, providing a much-needed impetus after the visitors stumbled with a flurry of wickets.

Quick wickets

India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (30), D. Hemalatha (37) and S. Sajana (1) fell in quick succession which allowed the hosts Bangladesh to halt India's progress as it was was aiming for a big total.

Harmanpreet and Hemalatha put on 60 runs for the third wicket for a strong foundation.

Highest total

India's 156 for five was the highest total of the series from either team with Smriti Mandhana setting the tone early on, hitting four fours and one six to make a fluent 33 off 25 balls.

Radha finished as the highest wicket-taker in the series with 10 dismissals in five games while Smriti's 116 runs in five outings were the most for any batter.

The scores:

India 156/5 in 20 overs (Smriti Mandhana 33, Hemalatha 37, Harmanpreet Kaur 30, Richa Ghosh 28 n.o., Rabeya Khan 2/28, Nahida Akter 2/27) bt Bangladesh 135/6 in 20 overs (Ritu Moni 37, Shorifa Khatun 28 n.o., Radha Yadav 3/24, Asha Sobhana 2/25).

India clinched series 5-0.

Kerala men shock defending champion Uttar Pradesh

NATIONAL JR. BASKETBALL

Sports Bureau

Kerala men bounced back from being 33-49 down at half-time to beat defending champion Uttar Pradesh 92-88 in a group-A league match of the 74th National junior basketball championship in Indore on Thursday.

In the women's section, Rajasthan surprised Kerala 80-63.

The results:
Men: Group-A: Kerala 92 (Vinay Sankar 28, LR Niranjan 15, Jins Joby 14, Asswin Krishna 12, Niyukth Salil 11) bt Uttar Pradesh 88 (Vedansh Ranot 24, Kunal Singgh 24, Harshit Tomar 14). Chandigarh 70 (Gourav Kumar Singh 19, Himanshu Hooda 12, Ravinder Kaushik 10) bt Punjab 64 (Sahibrjit Singh 20).
Group-B: Rajasthan 64 (Nitesh Kumar 17, Nuhammed Ishan 15, Mayank Jawa 11) bt Andhra Pradesh 24 (Dwaraknatha Reddy 22).
Madhya Pradesh 77 (Mohit Jogchand 25, Ajay 12, Kirtiraj Singh 10) bt Odisha 32 (Biswanath Sisa 14).
Women: Group-A: Rajasthan 80 (Priyanka Pal 29, Bhumika Verma 22, Priyanshi Joshi 14) bt Kerala 63 (Amanda Rocha 23).
Madhya Pradesh 66 (Kushpal Singh 29, Guni Agarwal 14) bt Karnataka 56 (Aditi Subramaniam 19, Tarun Tarushree 18).
Group-B: Maharashtra 98 (Aananya Bhavssar 37, Rajvi Maladhari 18, Gunjan Mantri 11) bt Chhattisgarh 54 (Palakshi Thakur 20, Komalpreet Kaur 17).
Gujarat 86 (Archi Patel 30, Aahana George 25, Aradhana Patel 12) bt Uttar Pradesh 77 (Ruby Rajput 24, Anushka Chouhan 23, Saloni Kumari 12).

SNAPSHOTS

Jyothi wins women's 100mh while Tejas bags men's 110mh

Asian champion Jyothi Yarraji clocked an impressive 12.87s while winning the women's 100m hurdles title in the Harry Schulting Games at Vught, Netherlands, on Thursday.

The 24-year-old Asian Games silver medallist had clocked 13.04s while winning the heats earlier.

Meanwhile Tejas Shirse clocked a personal best 13.56s while winning the men's 110m hurdles title while Amlan Borgohain had a DNS in the men's 200m heats.

Naruka misses skeet final by two points

Anantjeet Singh Naruka shot 120 out of 125 and missed the skeet final by two points in the shooting World Cup in Baku on Thursday. Naruka had a series of 22, 25, 25, 24 and 24 for 15th spot in a field of 80.

In women's skeet, Olympic quota winner Raiza Dhillon shot 114 for the 16th spot in a field of 45. The other Olympic quota winner Maheshwari Chauhan shot 113 for the 20th place.

The results: Skeet: Men: 1. Lyu Jianlin (Chn) 56(122); 2. Federico Gil (Arg) 50(122); 3. Ben Llewellin (GBR) 42(124); 15. Anantjeet Singh Naruka 120; 54. Sheeraz Sheikh 115; 76. Mairaj Ahmad Khan 105. **RPO:** Kuldeep Sanyashi 117; Arjun Thakur 110. **Women:** 1. Austen Smith (USA) 56(119); 2. Martina Maruzzo (Ita) 50(120); 3. Danka Bartekova (Svk) 43(119); 16. Raiza Dhillon 114; 20. Maheshwari Chauhan 113; 25. Ganemat Sekhon 111.

Sunil Kumar stays alive in race for Paris berth

Asian Games bronze medallist Sunil Kumar (87kg) was the lone Indian Greco Roman wrestler to remain alive in the race for a berth in Paris 2024.

In the World Olympic Games qualifier at Istanbul on Thursday, Sunil defeated Mexican Jose Andres Vargas Reuda 3-1 before getting beaten by Azerbaijan's Tokyo Olympic 77kg bronze medallist and 82kg World champion Rafig Huseynov 4-3 in the pre-quarterfinals.

As Huseynov reached the final and grabbed a place in the Olympics, Sunil qualified for the repechage round and stayed in the race for a bronze medal.

Apart from the finalists, the winner of the playoff between two bronze medallists will qualify for the Paris Games.

Other Indian Greco Roman wrestlers exited early.

Harshit stars for Kreeda Kshetra

Harshit Pai (101) took Kreeda Kshetra past School of Cricket in the Tiger Cup under-16 tournament here.

The scores: Kreeda Kshetra 308/6 in 30 overs (Harshit Pai 101, M.B. Bilal 88, G. Arvind 53) bt School of Cricket 110 in 24.2 overs (Aadrit Sengupta 35).

Unorthodox CA 222/3 in 30 overs (Saiteja Thokala 84, Manan Goel 71) bt Carmel School 175 in 26.4 overs (C. Nithin 64, Alexio Jose Ajeesh 3/41)

Holy Saint 215/7 in 30 overs (V. Krushna 36, Vishnu Reddy 31, Amogh Hegde 31, Gaurav 26) bt RKCA 130 in 27.1 overs (Mukul Gowda 33, S. Pranad 32, Krish Rao 4/24)

NHVPS 59 in 24.4 overs (Atharv Deshpande 3/22) bt Play Smart 60 for no loss in 4.2 overs (Mandar Pai 34 n.o.).

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INBRIEF

IOB Q4 standalone net profit rises 24% to ₹808 crore

Indian Overseas Bank's (IOB) standalone net profit for the quarter ended March rose 24% YoY to ₹808 crore due to increase in interest income and improvement in asset quality. Interest income rose 28% to ₹6,629 crore. Net interest income rose to ₹2,763 crore from ₹2,276 crore, while net interest margin rose to 3.53% from 3.20%. "It is the highest net profit the bank has registered for Q4 and ₹2,656 crore for the full year," MD & CEO Ajay Kumar Srivastava said.

PNB Q4 profit jumps almost threefold to ₹3,010 crore

State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Thursday posted a near three-fold increase in net profit at a 16-quarter high of ₹3,010 crore in March 2024 quarter, backed by improved core income and decline in bad loans. The bank earned a net profit of ₹1,159 crore in the same quarter a year earlier. Total income increased to ₹32,361 crore during the quarter under review, as against ₹27,269 crore in the same period last year, PNB said in a regulatory filing. PTI

Honda opens R&D centre to expedite electrification in India

Honda R&D (India), a subsidiary of Honda Motor Co. Ltd., opened its Solution R&D Centre in Bengaluru to accelerate electrification activities in India. The R&D centre would incorporate advanced mobility technologies into electrified vehicle development more quickly, and work on software and connected services through 'co-creating' open innovation by adopting technologies and ideas of research and development companies, the company said.

Markets plunge amid fears of uncertain poll outcome

Rumours over the Modi government's inability to retain majority in Parliament leads to a selling spree; S&P BSE Sensex fell 1,062 points, or 1.45% while NSE Nifty-50 index shed 345 points, or 1.55%

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Uncertainty over the General Elections' outcome led to panic selling in India's stock markets with key benchmark indices falling about 1.5%.

The S&P BSE Senesx fell 1,062 points, or 1.45% to 72,404. The NSE Nifty-50 index too shed 345 points or 1.55% to 21,957.5.

"There were murmurs [in the market] about lower than expected turnout in the polls, which could make it difficult for the Modi government to return," said Ambareesh Baliga, an independent stock analyst, adding the confidence in the Prime Minister's "400 plus (seats)" campaign has waned and has "unsettled investors."

Only auto stock stable

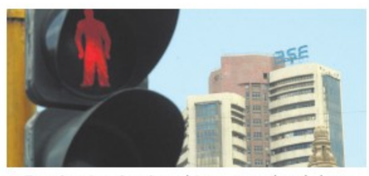
Except auto stocks, major sectors led by energy, metals, and realty faced selling pressure. Larsen & Toubro, down 6% led the fall among Sensex stocks, followed by Asian Paints, which fell 4.68%.

Seconding Mr. Baliga, Deven Choksey, MD, KRChoskey Shares & Securities Pvt. Ltd. added, "FIIs (Foreign Institutional Investors) are mainly selling fearing no clear majority (for any political party)."

Poll pangs

Rumours about lower-than-expected turnout at voting keep markets on edge

- Except auto, major sectors led by energy, metals and realty face selling pressure
- Larsen & Toubro, down 6%, leads the fall among Sensex stocks



- Foreign Institutional Investors lead the selling fearing no clear majority for any political party

SBI Q4 net rises 24% to ₹20,698 crore

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

State Bank of India (SBI) reported fourth-quarter standalone net profit rose 24% to ₹20,698 crore from the year-earlier period.

Net interest income (NII) increased marginally to ₹41,655 crore from ₹40,393 crore in the year-earlier period. Net interest margin declined 37 bps to 3.47%. The bank's loan loss provisions during the quarter increased 157.65% YoY to ₹3,294 crore, the country's largest public sector lender said in a filing.

Gross non-performing assets during the quarter declined 7.32% to ₹84,276 crore and net non-performing assets declined 1.94% to ₹21,051 crore.

Net profit for FY24 increased 21.59% to ₹61,077 crore over the previous year even after accounting for wage settlement and a one-time exceptional item of ₹7,100 crore.

NII for FY24 increased 10.38% YoY to ₹1,59,876 crore. The bank's NIM for FY24 marginally dropped by 9 bps YoY to 3.28%.

Credit growth was at 15.24% YoY with domestic advances growing by 16.26% YoY. Total deposits grew at 11.13% YoY.

"Our net profit for the financial year [FY24] is the highest ever. This is despite incurring wage revision expenses of ₹13,387 crore as per the bipartite wage settlement and after absorbing additional liability of ₹7,100 crore related to pensions and DA relief neutralisation in the third quarter," Chairman Dinesh Khara told journalists.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	THURSDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	72,404	-1.45
US Dollar	83.48	0.04
Gold	72,250	-0.06
Brent oil	83.78	0.19

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2766.65	-93.90
Adani Ports	1244.55	-32.70
Apollo Hosp	5806.40	-40.10
Asian Paints	2710.10	-133.20
Axis Bank	1115.65	-13.00
Bajaj Auto	8846.85	97.45
Bajaj Finserv	1564.60	-38.45
Bajaj Finance	6605.15	-194.30
Bharti Airtel	1275.45	-13.15
BPCL	592.15	-28.15
Britannia Ind	5070.10	-158.30
Cipla	1358.80	-25.95
Coal India	443.50	-20.95
Divis Lab	3789.95	-137.40
Dr Reddys Lab	5877.35	-179.00
Eicher Motors	4568.05	-32.05
Grasim Ind	2353.70	-23.65
HCL Tech	1320.05	6.40
HDFC Bank	1447.50	-35.15
HDFC Life	539.55	-10.90
Hero MotoCorp	4764.90	151.00
Hindalco	619.40	-14.10
Hind Unilever	2325.65	-15.40
ICICI Bank	1115.70	-7.30
IndusInd Bank	1401.45	-41.05
Infosys	1439.55	12.25
ITC	425.10	-15.90
JSW Steel	834.55	-30.10
Kotak Bank	1643.10	-5.25
L&T	3275.45	-211.40
LTIMindtree Ltd.	4658.00	-55.80
M&M	2212.55	30.15
Maruti Suzuki	12504.65	-38.90
NestleIndia	2513.45	-25.55
NTPC	346.05	-9.40
ONGC	265.25	-11.60
PowerGrid Corp	296.15	-5.85
Reliance Ind	2788.25	-48.85
SBI Life	1422.40	-4.35
State Bank	819.80	9.00
Shriram Finance Ltd.	2360.90	-87.10
Sun Pharma	1494.65	-27.10
TataConsumerProduct	1085.05	-30.00
Tata Motors	1030.30	18.20
Tata Steel	161.90	-4.15
TCS	3960.20	-16.75
Tech Mahindra	1269.10	-17.90
Titan	3245.70	-14.15
UltraTech Cement	9446.10	-73.30
Wipro	455.90	-7.30

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on May 09

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	83.30	83.62
Euro	89.45	89.80
British Pound	104.10	104.51
Japanese Yen (100)	53.43	53.64
Chinese Yuan	11.53	11.57
Swiss Franc	91.59	91.95
Singapore Dollar	61.42	61.66
Canadian Dollar	60.70	60.94
Malaysian Ringitt	17.56	17.65
Australian Dollar	54.80	55.01

Source:Indian Bank

TVS Holdings Q4 net profit rises 43% to ₹464 crore

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

TVS Holdings Ltd. (formerly Sundaram-Clayton Ltd.) consolidated net profit for the quarter ended March rose 43% year-on-year to ₹464 crore.

Revenue from operations increased to ₹10,125 crore from ₹8,523 crore, of which automotive components accounted for ₹202 crore, automotive vehicles and parts ₹8,412 crore and financial services ₹1,751 crore, the company said in a regulatory filing.

'Inflows into equity mutual funds declined 16% in April'

Ashley Coutinho
MUMBAI

Inflows into equity mutual funds was ₹18,917 crore in April, a 16% decline over the previous month, data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed.

Small-cap funds, which saw outflows of ₹94 crore in March after SEBI-mandated stress tests, were back on the investor radar, registering net inflows of ₹2,209 crore.

Sectoral/thematic funds cornered 27%, or ₹5,166 crore of the total flows. Multi-cap, large and mid-cap funds, and flexi-cap funds saw flows of more than ₹2,000 crore each. Flows in large-cap funds, however, declined 83% to ₹357 crore.

Equity flows were positive for 38 consecutive months.

"We are seeing heightened activity towards sectoral/thematic funds," said Chandraprakash Padiyar, Senior Fund Manager, Tata Asset Management.

"Our recommendation is that diversified funds would be a better bet for the long term over such funds, especially when valuations are on the higher side," he added.

KYC issues

Flows via systematic investment plans (SIPs), a monthly contribution, touched a new high of ₹20,371 crore despite KYC related issues faced by the industry last month.

While 93% of MF accounts had 'KYC validated' or 'KYC registered status', 3% accounts were on 'KYC hold', and another 4% had not done KYC.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

IHCL, CG Hospitality set up platform to run 25 hotels by 2025

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Indian Hotels Company Ltd. (IHCL) said it has signed an agreement with CG Hospitality to achieve a portfolio of 25 hotels by 2025 to be marketed under the platform 'Ekyam (oneness)'

"IHCL has a long-standing association with CG Hospitality, a member of the renowned CG Corp Global, for over two decades. Now, the next phase of this partnership will pursue accelerated growth in the Indian subcontinent," said IHCL MD &CEO Puneet Chhatwal.

"This collaboration will explore opportunities to manage hotels across regions around the Himalayas as well as the Indian ocean and strengthen the wildlife sector," he added.

"The platform will commence with the current portfolio of 11 operating hotels. And CG Hospitality will add 7 more hotels by 2025," said Rahul Chaudhary, MD, CG Hospitality. "Seven more hotels falling in this category, but owned by other property developers under the IHCL umbrella would be brought into this fold, thus making a total portfolio of 25 properties," he added.

"We are proud of CG Hospitality's partnership with Tata Group's IHCL, spanning 25 years. This expansion underscores the confidence and trust we place in IHCL's century-old legacy, which is globally recognised as the benchmark in Indian hospitality," said Dr. Binod Chaudhary, Chairman, CG Corp Global.

Hindustan Petroleum Corp. turns ₹16,015 crore PAT in FY24

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) reported consolidated net profit of ₹16,015 crore during FY24, against a consolidated net loss of ₹6,980 crore in the previous financial year.

Standalone net profit during FY24 was ₹14,694 crore compared with a net loss of ₹8,974 crore during the previous year. Standalone net profit for the fourth quarter was lower at ₹2,843 crore from ₹3,223 crore in the same period last year.

Revenue from operations for Q4 stood at ₹1,21,532 crore, up 6.2%.

For FY24, revenue from operations stood at ₹4,61,638 crore as compared with ₹4,66,192 crore during the previous year.

The Board also recommended a final dividend of ₹16.50 per equity share.

BPCL profit rises

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. posted net profit of ₹26,674 crore for FY24 compared with a profit of ₹1,870.1 crore in the previous year.

Net profit for Q4 stood at ₹4,224.18 crore as compared with a profit of ₹6,477.74 crore in the year earlier. Consolidated net profit for FY24 stood at ₹26,858.84 crore against a net profit of ₹2,131.05 crore in the previous year.

Life insurers April new business premium surges 61% to ₹20,259 crore

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

'Demand for higher insurance protection, particularly from corporate clients fuelled collections'

Life insurance companies in India reported a robust 61.23% year-on-year increase in new business premium for April to ₹20,258.86 crore.

The solid start to FY2025 is in sharp contrast to the muted April 2023 opening when the new business premium (NBP) underwritten by life insurers slid as much as 30% to ₹12,565.31 crore.

Demand for enhanced insurance protection, particularly from corporate consumers fuelled the April 2024 collections, the Life Insurance Council said, releasing the industry business figures.

Group single-premium collections rose 126.33% while policies and schemes for the same category were 60.42% higher. Individual, single-premium policies grew by 19.05% while non single-premium policies grew by 10.31%.

Group single-premium collections were also behind market leader Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) clocking 113.14% surge in NBP to ₹12,383.64 crore (₹5,810.10 crore). The group single-premium of the State-owned insurer rose by over twofold at 211.08% to ₹9,020.22 crore (₹2,899.63 crore). The NBP of private insurers was 16.58% more at ₹7,875.22 crore (₹6,755.21 crore).

आयुर्विज्ञान में राष्ट्रीय परीक्षा बोर्ड
(स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के अधीन एक स्वायत्त निकाय)
NATIONAL BOARD OF EXAMINATIONS IN MEDICAL SCIENCES
(Autonomous body under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India)
22nd
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CONVOCATION
Chief Guest
Smt. Droupadi Murmu
Hon'ble President of India
10th May, 2024
Vigyan Bhawan, Maulana Azad Road
New Delhi

Tart start

Low yield and increase in freight charges for export make it a diffficult season for mango farmers this year

Ranjani Govind

There is one more addition to the list of Bengaluru's woes this year apart from terrible traffic, dismal water levels and unprecedented heat – a low mango yield. "Let's admit it, 2024 is an off year for mangoes," says CG Nagaraju, Managing Director, Karnataka State Mango Development and Marketing Corporartion (KSMDMC). "The yield is dismally low, with only 30% of a year's regular production estimated to reach the market."

Nagaraju explains that under normal circumstances, Karnataka has a yield of 12 to 15 lakh metric tonnes of mangoes between mid-April and the first week of August, with early, mid and late seasonal varieties flooding the market.

"This season, even the early arrivals such as Raspuri and Badami are not as tasty as they used to be. There are many reasons for this. It's not just the lack of rain in April, but also improper weather patterns leading to physiological imbalances in the fruit. These factors have altered the growth and taste in each variety of mango."

This year, even the mid-seasonal varieties have been affected and they may reach the market only a few weeks later.

Karnataka's production of mangoes covers 16 districts – Kolar, Chikkaballapur, Tumkur, Hassan, Bengaluru rural and urban, Belagavi, Dharwad, Koppala, Haveri, Chitradurga, Chikkamangaluru, Bidar, Raichur, Kalaburagi and Ramanagara – with 60% coming from the southern regions of Kolar, Chikkaballapura, Ramanagara, Bengaluru rural and urban.

The mango harvesting has begun, albeit on a smaller scale, says Nagaraju. "While it is time to get the native Alphonso or Badami from Dharwad, Belgaum, Haveri, Gadag and Koppal, Benishan (Banganapalli), Neelam, Mallika and Totapuri will come from Kolar and Chikkaballapura in June. There is a possibility we can cover the deficit partially with Totapuri, as it is a high-yielding, hardy crop compared to other delicate varieties."

Sunshine yellow Mango varieties are slowly trickling into the market; (below) B Gangadhara Murthy of the Grameena Angadi.
SUDHAKARA JAIN, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

One of the two new mango varieties one can see in Karnataka markets this year is the all-season Katimon, says Nagaraju.

New in the market

"Local farmers are cultivating it. Coming under the umbrella of *naadu maavu* (indigenous mangoes), Katimon was given to nurseries and farmers for cultivation a few years ago. As they have a quicker yield time with a smaller canopy, the crop has a unique sweetness and a satisfactory yield. It will be harvested soon for local consumption."

The other variety is a coastal Karnataka special, Kari ishad (from the Ankola region in Uttara Kannada) that has been accorded the GI Tag, as it is considered one of the finest varieties for its aroma and sweetness. One of the oldest varieties in the country, the high amount of pulp it yields saw the fruit being canned from the time of the British.

Karnataka's bounty

Karnataka has nearly 1,000 varieties of wild mangoes and nearly 150 of them are of the pickling variety, says AN Yellappa Reddy, well-known author, tree expert, and former Administrator of Forests.

Apart from the Mango Development Corporation, the Indian Institute of Horticulture Research (IIHR) has also conserved more than 1,000 varieties in commercial, non-commercial, wild and semi-wild varieties of mango.

Karnataka is the third largest producer of mangoes after Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra with varieties grown across 1.6 lakh hectares.

To order mangoes online log on to www.karsirimangoes.karnataka.gov.in, call 91 -7411168063 or mail karsirimangoes@gmail.com.

The organic market

"As of now we have seven organic varieties that have arrived from Tumkur, Hoskote and Kanakapura villages," says B Gangadhara Murthy of Grameena Angadi, Jayanagar 4th T Block. Gangadhara is a trustee of the Grameena Handicrafts Artisans Group that has around 50 farmer groups that have been supplying organic mangoes for the last 15 years.

Grameena Angadi has Banganapalli (also called Benishan or Begampalli), Raspuri, Badami, Mallika, Malgova, Badam kesar and Imam pasand with prices ranging between ₹200 and ₹500 per kg.

"For home delivery, call 96068 19123 / 96068 39123," says Murthy.

STEPOUT

Paint my love

Indiranagar SOCIAL is hosting a Mother's Day event called Sip & Paint. Organised in association with Qreative, it will be held on May 12, noon onwards. Promising to be an artistic adventure, one can get to explore the art of canvas painting, and take home your personalised work as well, as a tribute to motherhood and creativity. Material will be provided at the venue. Fee is ₹1,799.

At Indiranagar SOCIAL. Call 9730414026 for details.

A brunch and a munch

BLVD Club celebrates Mother's Day with a special brunch menu. The live cooking counters will dish out tacos and *shawarmas* with salad. Samurai stations will offer salads with ingredients such as raw mango, romaine lettuce, Asian glass noodles and cold cut platters. There will also be live barbeque grill counters, desserts and a range of assorted chocolate treats for children.

Call 97 3110 1414 for details.

Adults only

Heart Tales is a session of storytelling for adults by Ameen Haque. Ameen, the founder of Storywallahs, will share stories of "the heart, from the heart". He describes himself as a story monk who loves researching, listening to and collecting stories, apart from climbing hills and playing table tennis. The event is open to those aged 18 years and above.

Tickets at ₹180 per person are available on BookMyShow. On May 11, 5.30pm at Atta Galatta. Call 9632510126 for details.

Dirty coffee? Yay!

Not everything dirty should be frowned upons, especially if it is Dirty Coffee

Hot mess Dirty coffee. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

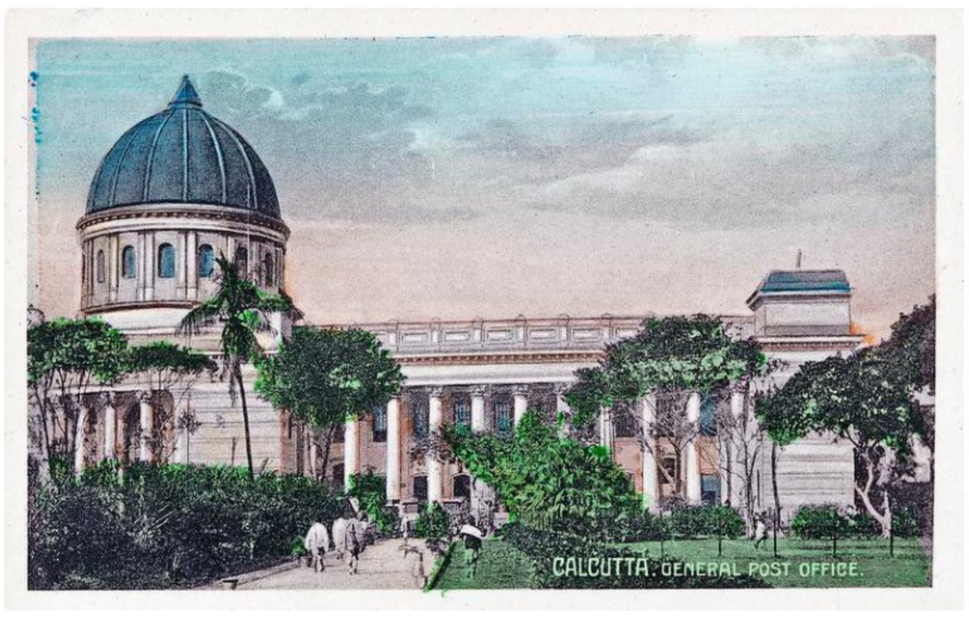
Prabalika M Borah
prabalika.m@thehindu.co.in

If it is trending in Japan, you must give it a try. No, not the armpit sweat sushi that is going viral. It is a coffee called Dirty Coffee, an espresso drink that has gained popularity in Asian countries such as Japan, China, and Malayasia.

Dirty coffee gets its name from its messy look. While no one knows who made the first cup of Dirty Coffee, it is believed the drink first appeared on the menu of Bear Pond Espresso, a coffee shop in Tokyo, Japan.

Dirty coffee is nothing but two shots of concentrated espresso poured directly over chilled milk. As the coffee bleeds slowly into the chilled milk, it creates a marble effect in the coffee glass it is served in.

Only two ingredients are used to make dirty coffee: espresso shots, and cold milk. Rohit Rao, owner of True Black in Hyderabad where this coffee is served, says, "To add some variations, whipped cream or half-and-half cream can be added. This also balances the bitterness. A good coffee glass is what makes dirty coffee dramatic, which is why we use a plain coffee glass. It is quite an interesting coffee for those who enjoy black coffee. Internationally, cafes are also trying vegan versions of it." Dirty coffee is best when had strong, the espresso shot comes first, followed by the chilled milk or cream. One can customise it by adding double espresso shots as well.



Postcards from the past

An exhibition of postcards from India's colonial era is currently underway in the city at the Museum of Art and Photography

Ruth Dhanaraj
ruth.dhanaraj@thehindu.co.in

An exhibition of over 80 postcards titled Hello & Goodbye: Postcards from the Early 20th Century is currently underway at the Museum of Art and Photography (MAP), showcasing missives from India's colonial era.

It would seem that X (formerly Twitter), does not have dibs on character restriction. According to Khushi Bansal who curated Hello & Goodbye with a team from MAP, "The messages on these postcards tell us a lot about life in those times. What is interesting is how abbreviations were used to convey news within a limited space; short forms are not a contemporary concept."

Khushi says Hello & Goodbye was conceptualised "after we realised we have such an expansive post card collection at MAP". A chunk of the collection comprises around 1,300 postcards that were donated by Kenneth X and Joyce Robbins to MAP.

However, quantity alone is not reason enough for an exhibition. The team realised these postcards provided a wealth of information on life in those times, especially in areas of cultural identity and lived history.

Notes from history Some of the postcards on display at MAP. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

For over six months, the team pored over thousands of postcards from their collection, sorting them by different categories such as architecture, landscape and more.

According to Khushi, the team focused on three aspects to structure Hello & Goodbye. "First, we looked at the overall history of the early 20th century. Though postcards were introduced in the late 19th century, we looked at the period during which they were most highly circulated," says Khushi.

Interesting facets of human nature emerged during the team's work with these postcards. "Over the course of our research, we found out that a lot of people wrote postcards in letter format, resulting in a series of notes from which the receiver would piece together information," she says.

Second, the team began to look into how people's use of postcards reflected the notion of their own identities and beliefs.

Khushi says there was a natural segue to memory and nostalgia as the final aspect of the exhibition. "A postcard is a message from one person to another, and while most of them were little love notes between family, friends and lovers, they were also used by companies to communicate matters relating to business."

Postcards present

"Linking to the idea of how postcards revolutionised communication, we wanted to revisit the idea of sending postcards – whether to a loved one or even to yourself. So we set up a little table with yellow postcards from the post office with a stamp already affixed. Visitors who are so inclined can write a message and if they put in the correct address, we will mail it for them."

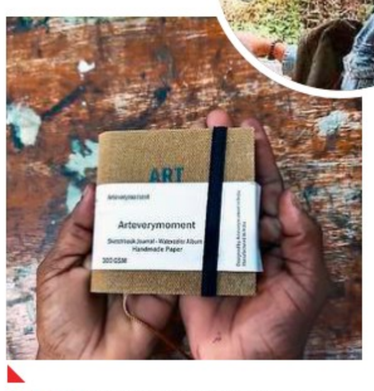
The team at MAP also put together a digital postcard greeting. "This essentially means you can play around with different backgrounds and elements to design your own postcard. Once done, you can scan a QR code as well as a specially designed stamp by MAP and email this digital version to any recipient."

Hello & Goodbye at the Museum of Art and Photography will be on display till August 18, 2024

By hand

This small business in Cherthala handmakes artists' sketchbooks out of cotton, handmade paper

Shilpa Nair Anand
shilpa.nair@thehindu.co.in



Fine eye Kajal Deth and an Art Every Moment creation. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Cherthala-based artist Kajal Deth says the kind of paper an artist uses is an important component for their creative expression. "The paper does half the work...it should respond when you draw on it." Locally available paper, most imported from China, did not 'respond' as she wanted, so she decided to make her own sketchbooks. And that is how handmade Art Every Moment sketchbooks came to be.

"As artists, sketching is a part of our practice, in fact it is fundamental to art. The paper we use is important, it plays a role in how the colour translates...things that are important to artists," says Kajal over the phone. A student of painting from the RLV College of Music and Fine Arts, Kajal, 38, has been part of solo and group shows in Kerala and outside.

She was toying with the idea of making sketchbooks when she heard of Asha, a woman in her neighbourhood, an expert in binding books. Initially she made the books for herself and gave her friends a few. Buoyed by their response, she got down to making the books. Asha trained four other women, and Art Every Moment was on its way in 2019. She started selling at Lokame Tharavadu (2021), a two-month art extravaganza put together by the Kochi Biennale Foundation.

The space at the Biennale Kada (shop), the souvenir store at the Kochi Biennale 2022, served as an introduction to a customer base from across the country of artists, designers, architects and celebrities such as Lisa Ray.

Bengaluru-based artists John Xavier, Dhanaraj Keezhara and Thasheena Kuttappa are among her clientele.

"It is intended as a sketchbook, you can sketch, draw using charcoal and watercolours too. Some people use it for journaling too," Kajal says. She uses different kinds of cotton, handmade paper for the books of varying GSM and sizes – from palm size to the much-in-demand A4 and A5.

The prices of the sketchbooks/journals/watercolour pads range from ₹50 to ₹3,500. The cutting is perhaps the only mechanised process, "The rest of it is all made by hand. The cover is canvas, the inside pocket and elastic closure are all hand-attached."

"I source cotton, handmade paper from India, of course. From where, I will not tell you because it is a trade secret. The cutting is outsourced locally, and the binding is done by the five women."

Art Every Moment sketchbooks are available in select stores and online @arteverymoment on Instagram

LAST 3 DAYS
ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು
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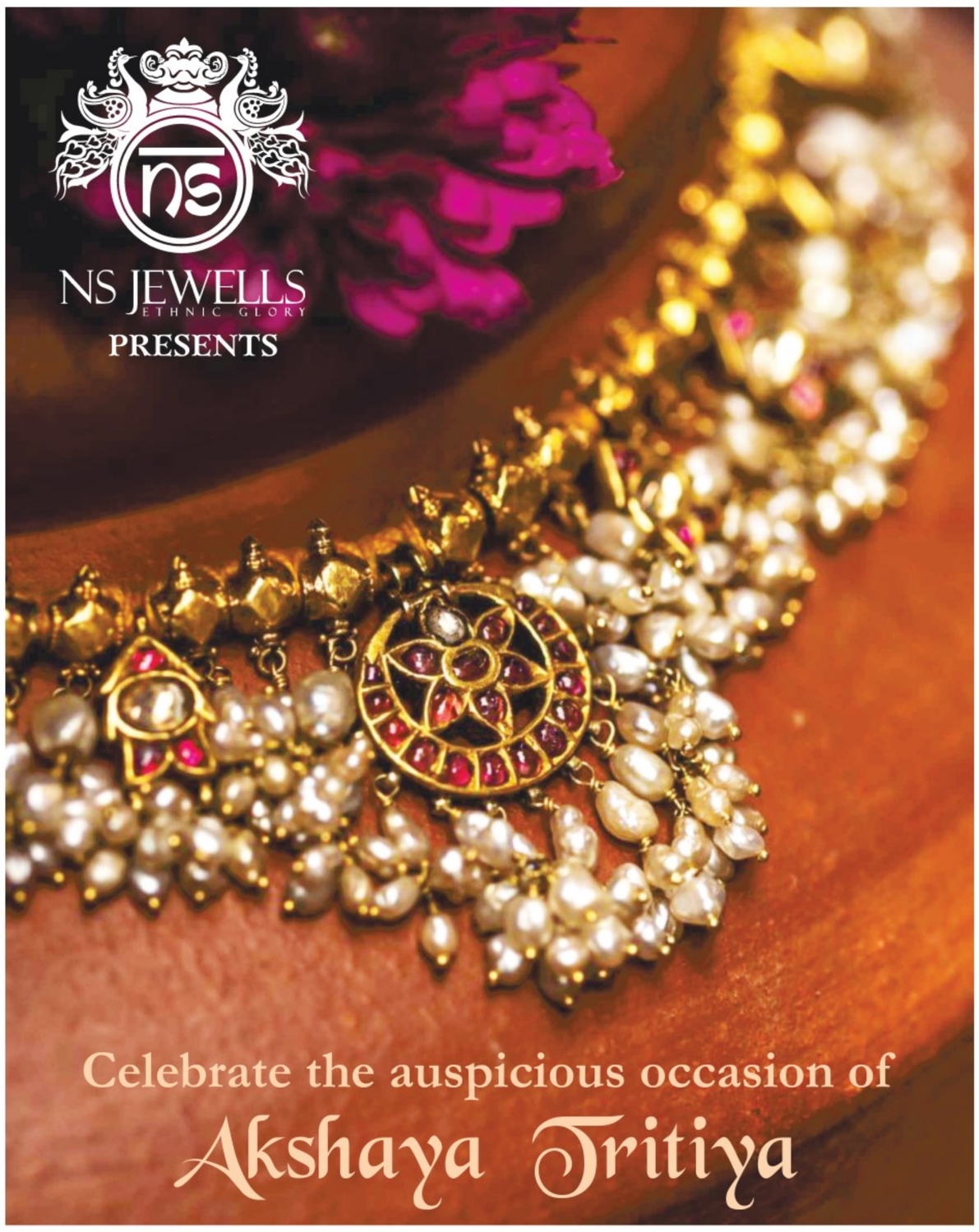
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M BG-BGE

BEIRUT

Four Hezbollah members killed in Israeli strike, says Lebanese source

GETTY IMAGES

A Lebanese security source, requesting anonymity, said that four Hezbollah members were killed in an Israeli strike on a vehicle in the country's south. Hezbollah did not immediately comment on the incident. Meanwhile, the Israeli Army said, "We do not comment on reports in the foreign media." AFP

LONDON

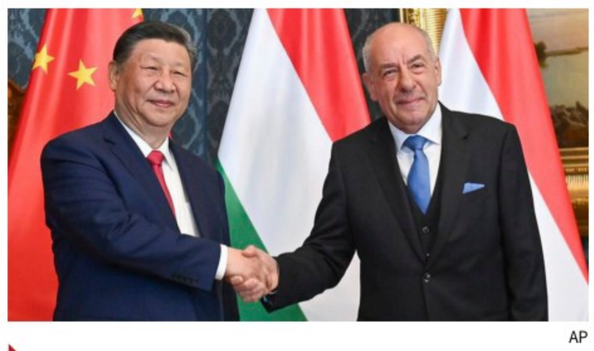
U.K. girl's hearing restored after groundbreaking gene therapy

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

An 18-month old British girl, Opal, who was born without hearing faculty, is believed to be the youngest person to have their hearing restored after undergoing groundbreaking new gene therapy developed by U.S. biotech firm Regeneron. Ear surgeon Manohar Bance called the results close to normal hearing restoration. AFP

BUDAPEST

China's Xi in Hungary to celebrate 'new journey' with closest EU ally



AP

Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Hungary on Thursday seeking a "new journey" with Beijing's closest European Union ally amid divisions with the West. According to the Hungarian government, the two countries are expected to sign at least 16 different agreements promoting their cooperation. AFP

DAKAR

11 injured as Boeing plane leaves runway in Senegal; airport closed

REUTERS

A Boeing plane came off the runway during takeoff in Senegal early on Thursday, injuring 11 people and forcing the international airport near the capital Dakar to close, its management said. The B737/300 aircraft was carrying 78 passengers and headed for the Malian capital Bamako, the airport's managers LAS said. AP

U.S. won't supply weapons to Israel if it launches attack on Rafah: Biden

Over concern for the well-being of the more than 1 million civilians sheltering in Rafah, President Joe Biden says he will not supply offensive weapons to Israel; the shipment was supposed to consist of 1,800 900-kg bombs and 1,700 225-kg bombs

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden said on Wednesday that he would not supply offensive weapons that Israel could use to launch an all-out assault on Rafah – the last major Hamas stronghold in Gaza – over concern for the well-being of the more than 1 million civilians sheltering there.

Mr. Biden, in an interview with *CNN*, said the U.S. was still committed to Israel's defence and would supply Iron Dome rocket interceptors and other defensive arms, but that if Israel goes into Rafah, "we're not going to supply the weapons and artillery shells used".

U.S. President Joe Biden steps off of Marine One before departing Chicago O'Hare International Airport in Chicago on Wednesday. AFP

The U.S. has historically provided enormous amounts of military aid to Israel. That has only accelerated in the aftermath of Hamas's October 7 attack that killed some 1,200 in Israel and led to about 250 being taken captive by militants.

Mr. Biden's comments and his decision last week to pause a shipment of heavy bombs to Israel are the most striking manifestations of the growing daylight between his administration and Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government. Mr. Biden said on Wednesday that Israel's actions around Rafah had "not yet" crossed his red lines, but has repeated that Israel needs to do far more to protect the lives of civilians in Gaza.

The shipment was supposed to consist of 1,800 900-kg bombs and 1,700 225-kg bombs, according to a senior U.S. administration official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive matter. The focus of U.S. concern was the larger explosives and how they could be used in a dense urban area.

"Civilians have been killed in Gaza as a consequence of those bombs and other ways in which they go after population centres," Mr. Biden said.

"We're not walking away from Israel's security," Mr. Biden continued. "We're walking away from Israel's ability to wage war in those areas."

Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin earlier on Wednesday confirmed the weapons delay, telling the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defence that the U.S. paused "one shipment of high payload munitions".

"We're going to continue to do what's necessary to ensure that Israel has the means to defend itself," Mr. Austin said. "But that said, we are currently reviewing some near-term security assistance shipments in the context of unfolding events in Rafah."

On Victory Day, Putin says nuclear forces are on alert

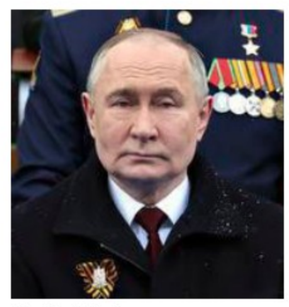
Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

President Vladimir Putin on Thursday warned his nuclear forces were "always" on alert, and added that Moscow would not tolerate any Western threats, during an address on the annual Victory Day parade.

In a defiant speech on Red Square before thousands of soldiers dressed in ceremonial attire, Mr. Putin heaped praise on his Army fighting in Ukraine and accused "Western elites" of fomenting conflicts around the world.

"Russia will do everything to prevent a global clash, but at the same time we will not allow anyone to threaten us. Our strategic forces are always on alert," Mr. Putin told the crowd.

"Dear friends, Russia is now going through a difficult, crucial period. The fate of the Motherland, its future depends on each of us," he said.



Vladimir Putin

The May 9 parade marks the Soviet Union's defeat of Nazi Germany in the Second World War and has become Russia's most important public holiday as Mr. Putin puts the country firmly on a combat footing.

Mr. Putin has used nuclear rhetoric throughout the conflict but has grown increasingly belligerent since last year, pulling out of a nuclear test ban treaty and a key arms reduction agreement with the United States.

Nuclear drills

Earlier this week, he ordered the Russian military to hold nuclear drills involving the Navy and troops based near Ukraine, raising fears he could use the powerful weapons on the battlefield.

In comments recorded on Tuesday but released by the Kremlin after the parade, Mr. Putin vowed to modernise his Army's weaponry and said Russia would use whatever foreign parts it could get to make them.

Mr. Putin has repeatedly framed the current fight against Ukraine as an existential battle against "Nazism", a message he reiterated in his address Thursday.

Taliban warn against working with channel

Associated Press
KABUL

Taliban on Thursday warned presspersons and experts against working with *Afghanistan International TV*. It's the first time they have told people not to cooperate with a specific outlet.

Afghanistan International TV, which is headquartered in London, is accessible through satellite, cable and social media.

A spokesperson for the Taliban-controlled Ministry of Information and Culture alleged the station was committing professional violations and violating legal boundaries.

The Media Violations Commission wanted all journalists and experts in Afghanistan to cease their collaboration with the station, said ministry spokesperson Habib Ghofran.

The director of *Afghanistan International TV*, Harun Najafizada, said the decision would not affect the channel because it had no employees or freelancers in the country.

Afghanistan fares abysmally in terms of press freedom.

China's aircraft carrier *Fujian* completes 8-day sea trial

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

China's third aircraft carrier, *Fujian*, has successfully completed its eight-day maiden sea trials. *Fujian* is an 80,000-tonne supercarrier with electromagnetic catapults for launching aircraft, making China the second country after the U.S. to field a supercarrier with this technology.

"During the sea trial, the aircraft carrier tested its propulsion, electrical systems, and other equipment, and achieved the expected results. In the next stage, People's Liberation Army Navy Ship (PLANS) *Fujian* will conduct follow-up tests according to established plans," according to *China Military Online*, the English language news website of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA). The aircraft carrier set sail for trials from Jiangnan Shipyard in Shanghai on May 01.

The developments will be watched very closely by India and other countries in the region which are also planning to build aircraft carriers as Beijing rapidly expands its maritime power and presence.

Named after East China's Fujian Province and given the hull number 18, the carrier was launched in June 2022. Last month, China announced that it is building its fourth aircraft carrier, likely a nuclear-powered supercarrier, to be unveiled very soon. China's first aircraft carrier *Liaoning* was commissioned in 2012 and the second carrier *Shadong* was launched in 2017.

Setting sail: China's third aircraft carrier, *Fujian*, conducts its maiden sea trial on May 01. AP

In an interview last week, outgoing Commander of Hawaii-based U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) Adm John Aquilino said that in the three years since he's been in command, China has built more than 400 aircraft, 20 major warships, and doubled its missile inventory.

Indian Navy's carriers

Indian Navy currently operates two aircraft carriers - refurbished Russian carrier *INS Vikramaditya*, commissioned in 2013, and indigenously designed and built *INS Vikrant*, commissioned in September 2022.

In the second half of last year, the Indian Navy has moved the case for a second Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC-II), a repeat of a Vikrant-like carrier which has been approved by the Defence Procurement Board last September. It is now awaiting approval by the Defence Acquisition Council, expected to be taken up after the elections.

It will take around eight to 10 years to build a new carrier, Madhu S. Nair, Chairman and Managing Director of Cochin Shipyard Limited, told *The Hindu* as reported earlier, as long as the basic design, engines and propulsion are kept intact.

Sport

Real does what it does best, conjures up another epic comeback, this time against Bayern

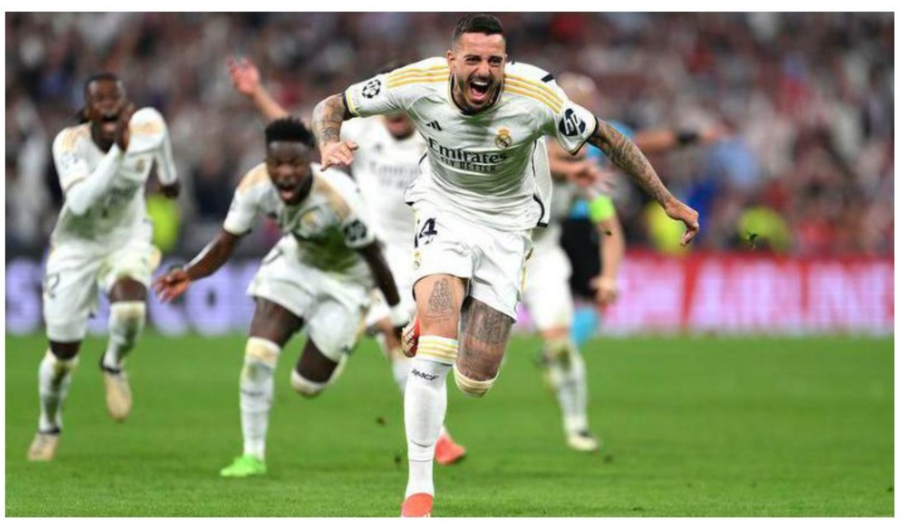
CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Associated Press
MADRID

After yet another magical night at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium, Real Madrid is back in the Champions League final.

The 14-time European champion pulled off another thrilling comeback on Wednesday, rallying to defeat Bayern Munich 2-1 and reach the final for the second time in three seasons.

Joselu scored in the 88th minute and then in stoppage time as Madrid advanced 4-3 on aggregate to set up a final against Borussia Dortmund on June 1 in London.



Man of the moment: Joselu leads Real's celebrations after his winner is confirmed by VAR. GETTY IMAGES

Bayern had taken the lead on an Alphonso Davies goal in the 68th – and then deep in stoppage time thought it had equalised but hadn't because of an offside call.

Joselu's first goal was a tap in after Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer spilled an easy save. The second was initially called off for offside but was eventually allowed after video review.

It will be Madrid's record-extending 18th European Cup final, and ninth in the Champions League era, also a record. Madrid beat Liverpool when it last made it to the final in 2022.

It was a mostly even match but Madrid created the most significant scoring chances. But it had not been able to get past what was a terrific performance by Neuer, who had made a series of difficult saves to keep Bayern in the match.

The result: Semifinal, second leg: Real Madrid 2 (Joselu 88, 90+1) bt Bayern Munich 1 (Davies 68) (*Real wins 4-3 on aggregate*).

Struggle: Nadal took almost three hours to beat Bergs. GETTY IMAGES

Nadal squeezes past a qualifier in opener

ROME OPEN

Agence France-Presse
ROME

Rafael Nadal battled into the second round of the Rome Open on Thursday after bouncing back from a set down to beat qualifier Zizou Bergs of Belgium 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

The match lasted nearly three hours.

Nadal will face World No. 9 Hubert Hurkacz next.

The 37-year-old has struggled with injury, dropping down to 305 in the rankings.

Pathirana in Sri Lanka T20 World Cup squad

Press Trust of India
COLOMBO

Matheesha Pathirana, who is recuperating from a hamstring niggle, was on Thursday named in Sri Lanka's squad for next month's T20 World Cup, which will be led by Wanindu Hasaranga.

The squad: Wanindu Hasaranga (capt.), Charit Asalanka (vice-capt.), Kusal Mendis, Pathum Nissanka, Kamindu Mendis, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Angelo Mathews, Dasun Shanaka, Dhananjaya de Silva, Maheesh Theekshana, Dunith Wellalage, Dushmantha Chameera, Nuwan Thushara, Matheesha Pathirana, Dilshan Madhushanka.
Travelling reserves: Asitha Fernando, Vijayakanth Viyaskanth, Bhanuka Rajapaksa, Janith Liyanage.